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## MACBETH

BY  
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

EDITED BY RICHARD GRANT  
WHITE, AND FURNISHED  
WITH ADDITIONAL  
NOTES BY,  
HELEN GRAY CONE



HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & COMPANY  
BOSTON, NEW YORK, AND CHICAGO  
*The Riverside Press, Cambridge*

Entered at the Post Office, Boston, Mass., as second-class matter

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Boston : 4 Park Street ; New York : 11 East Seventeenth Street

Chicago : 158 Adams Street

The Riverside Press, Cambridge

FR 2823  
. A2 W5

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12-38521

*The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.*  
Electrotyped and Printed by H. O. Houghton and Company.

## NOTE.

THE plan adopted in this edition is the same as that followed in *As You Like It* in this series, Number 93. Mr. White's text and apparatus have been used, and the necessary additions enclosed in brackets. In the *Suggestions for Special Study*, the intention has been to point out the most profitable lines of investigation, and to assist the student in forming a clear and consistent notion of the characters. Reference has been made to Professor Dowden's *Shakspeare: His Mind and Art*, and to Professor Corson's *Introduction to the Study of Shakespeare*. These works are earnestly commended to the student. All other quotations are from the Furness Variorum *Macbeth*. To Dr. Furness every lover of Shakespeare must heartily profess, "More is thy due than more than all can pay."





## INTRODUCTION.

FOR the incidents of this grand tragedy Shakespeare went to Holinshed's *Chronicles*, in which he found all of them, with the principal personages and their traits of character. His part of the work was the weaving of two stories of ambition and blood into one, and the decoration of the composite whole with his matchless dramatic and poetic style. As dramatist never, and as poet rarely, does he rise above the grandeur and the power of the second act of this tragedy, in which, for a time that tries our endurance with the strain, he stands working with steady nerve and even hand upon the dizzy apex of sublimest terror. *Macbeth*, plainly the product of its author's vigorous maturity, yet contains a few passages which are thin in thought and weak in words, and which are not in Shakespeare's style. George Steevens's discovery, in 1779, of Middleton's play, *The Witch*, in manuscript, helps us here. For in that are found the songs beginning "Come away" and "Black spirits," which the folio briefly directs to be sung in this. A comparison of the two indicates the probability that *Macbeth* was produced thus. Not very long after James I.'s accession to the throne of England (in 1604), it was thought desirable to produce a play on a Scotch subject; and this had to be done in haste. The story of *Macbeth* was selected. Shakespeare perhaps sketched the tragedy, and certainly wrote most of it himself; but he was helped in some of the least important parts, particularly in the witches' scenes, by Thomas Middleton, an inferior and younger dramatist, who may have already written the supernatural scenes in his *Witch*, and may also have been the original projector of this play, which Shakespeare took out of his hands; leaving him most of his supernatural business to work up afterwards into his own *Witch*. This supposition affects only about 170 lines, mostly short, and many consisting of but two words. We hear of *Macbeth* in 1610, and not as an old play. Shakespeare's work on it, therefore, was done between 1605 and 1609. It was first printed in the folio of 1623, with not a few important mutilations. Its action covers a period of fifteen years, — from A. D. 1039 to 1054. [On the genuineness of the text, the relation of the play to history, and the duration of the action, see, further, *Suggestions for Special Study*.]

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DUNCAN, <i>King of Scotland.</i>	<i>An English Doctor.</i>
MALCOLM, } <i>his sons.</i>	<i>A Scotch Doctor.</i>
DONALBAIN, }	<i>A Soldier.</i>
MACBETH, } <i>generals of the King's army.</i>	<i>A Porter.</i>
BANQUO, }	<i>An Old Man.</i>
MACDUFF, }	
LENNOX, }	LADY MACBETH.
ROSS, }	LADY MACDUFF.
MENTEITH, } <i>noblemen of Scotland.</i>	<i>Gentlewoman attending on Lady Mac-</i>
ANGUS, }	<i>beth.</i>
CAITHNESS, }	
FLEANCE, <i>son to Banquo.</i>	HECATE.
SIWARD, <i>Earl of Northumberland, gen-</i>	<i>Three Witches.</i>
<i>eral of the English forces.</i>	<i>Apparitions.</i>
Young SIWARD, <i>his son.</i>	
SEYTON, <i>an officer attending on Mac-</i>	<i>Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers,</i>
<i>beth.</i>	<i>Murderers, Attendants, and Messen-</i>
<i>Boy, son to Macduff.</i>	<i>gers.</i>

SCENE: Scotland; England.

# MACBETH.

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## ACT I.

### SCENE I. *A desert place.*

*Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches.*

*First Witch.* When shall we three meet again  
In thunder, lightning, or in rain ?

*Sec. Witch.* When the hurlyburly's done,  
When the battle's lost and won.

*Third Witch.* That will be ere the set of sun.

*First Witch.* Where the place ?

*Sec. Witch.* Upon the heath.

*Third Witch.* There to meet with Macbeth.

*First Witch.* I come, Graymalkin !

*Sec. Witch.* Paddock calls.

*Third Witch.* Anon.

10

*All.* Fair is foul, and foul is fair ;  
Hover through the fog and filthy air. [*Exeunt.*]

8. **Graymalkin** : name of the typical female cat, as Reynard for fox.

9. **Paddock** = toad. [The witches respond to the summons of their familiar spirits, accustomed to take the forms of cat and toad.]

10. [**Anon** = presently ; here, " I am coming at once."]

SCENE II. *A camp near Forres.*

*Alarum within. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Sergeant.*

*Dun.* What bloody man is that? He can report,  
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt  
The newest state.

*Mal.* This is the sergeant  
Who like a good and hardy soldier fought  
'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend!  
Say to the King the knowledge of the broil  
As thou didst leave it.

*Ser.* Doubtful it stood;  
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together  
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald —  
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that 10  
The multiplying villanies of nature  
Do swarm upon him — from the western isles  
Of kerns and gallowglasses is supplied;  
And fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,  
Show'd like a rebel's whore : but all 's too weak:  
For brave Macbeth — well he deserves that name —  
Disdaining fortune, with his brandish'd steel,  
Which smok'd with bloody execution,  
Like valour's minion carved out his passage  
Till he faced the slave; 20  
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,  
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps,  
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.

*Dun.* O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!

13. kerns and gallowglasses. Kerns were light-armed troops; gallowglasses wore mail, and used long heavy swords.

21. Which ne'er shook hands : a passage incurably corrupted. If these words were omitted, as they might well be, both sense and rhythm would be complete.

*Ser.* As whence the sun 'gins his reflection  
Shipwracking storms and direful thunders break,  
So from that spring whence comfort seem'd to come  
Discomfort swells. Mark, King of Scotland, mark :  
No sooner justice had with valour arm'd  
Compell'd these skipping kerns to trust their heels, 30  
But the Norweyan lord surveying vantage,  
With furbish'd arms and new supplies of men  
Began a fresh assault.

*Dun.* Dismay'd not this  
Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo ?

*Ser.* Yes ;  
As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.  
If I say sooth, I must report they were  
As cannons overcharged with double cracks ; so they  
Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe :  
Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,  
Or memorize another Golgotha, 40  
I cannot tell.  
But I am faint, my gashes cry for help.

*Dun.* So well thy words become thee as thy wounds ;  
They smack of honour both. Go get him surgeons.

[*Exit Sergeant, attended.*]

Who comes here ?

*Enter Ross.*

*Mal.* The worthy thane of Ross.

37. **cracks** = loads, charges which when discharged make a noise, or crack.

40. [**Memorize another Golgotha** = make memorable another place of death, like the Golgotha of the crucifixion.]

41. [**I cannot tell** = I do not know what to think, or say, of it : an Elizabethan colloquialism.]

45. **thane** = a servant of the king : an Anglo-Saxon title of nobility next below that of earl.

*Len.* What a haste looks through his eyes! So  
should he look  
That seems to speak things strange.

*Ross.* God save the King!

*Dun.* Whence cam'st thou, worthythane?

*Ross.* From Fife, great king;  
Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky  
And fan our people cold. Norway himself, 50  
With terrible numbers,  
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor  
The thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict;  
Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapp'd in proof,  
Confronted him with self-comparisons,  
Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,  
Curbing his lavish spirit: and, to conclude,  
The victory fell on us.

*Dun.* Great happiness!

*Ross.* That now  
Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition;  
Nor would we deign him burial of his men 60  
Till he disbursed at Saint Colme's inch  
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

*Dun.* No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive  
Our bosom interest: go pronounce his present death,  
And with his former title greet Macbeth.

*Ross.* I'll see it done.

*Dun.* What he hath lost noble Macbeth hath won.

[*Exeunt.*]

54. [*Bellona's bridegroom*: Macbeth is evidently meant. The mythological allusion is faulty, unless the expression be taken as equivalent to "a very bridegroom for Bellona, a hero worthy to wed her."]

55. [*self-comparisons* = likenesses of himself, counterparts; the meaning is brought out in the next line.]

SCENE III. *A heath near Forres.**Thunder. Enter the three Witches.**First Witch.* Where hast thou been, sister?*Sec. Witch.* Killing swine.*Third Witch.* Sister, where thou?*First Witch.* A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,

And munch'd, and munch'd, and munch'd: — "Give me," quoth I;

"Aroint thee, witch!" the rump-fed ronyon cries.

Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger:

But in a sieve I'll thither sail,

And, like a rat without a tail,

I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

10

*Sec. Witch.* I'll give thee a wind.*First Witch.* Thou 'rt kind.*Third Witch.* And I another.*First Witch.* I myself have all the other,

And the very ports they blow,

All the quarters that they know

I' th' shipman's card.

I will drain him dry as hay:

Sleep shall neither night nor day

Hang upon his pent-house lid;

20

6. **Aroint** = (manifestly) *avaunt*, *begone*; but what the word really means, and whence it came, no one knows. See it again, *King Lear*, Act III. Sc. 4, line 149, but nowhere else, I believe, in all English literature. **rump-fed** = coarsely, grossly fed; **ronyon** is plainly an Eng. form of the Fr. *rognon* = a scabby, mangy person.

9. [Steevens cites the old superstition, that "though a witch could assume the form of any animal she pleased, the tail would still be wanting."]

17. **shipman's card** = sailor's chart.

He shall live a man forbid :  
 Weary se'nnights nine times nine  
 Shall he dwindle, peak and pine :  
 Though his bark cannot be lost,  
 Yet it shall be tempest-tost.  
 Look what I have.

*Sec. Witch.* Show me, show me.

*First Witch.* Here I have a pilot's thumb,  
 Wreck'd as homeward he did come. [Drums within.]

*Third Witch.* A drum, a drum ! 30  
 Macbeth doth come.

*All.* The weird sisters, hand in hand,  
 Posters of the sea and land,  
 Thus do go about, about :  
 Thrice to thine and thrice to mine  
 And thrice again, to make up nine.  
 Peace ! the charm 's wound up.

*Enter MACBETH and BANQUO.*

*Macb.* So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

*Ban.* How far is 't call'd to Forres ? What are  
 these

So wither'd and so wild in their attire, 40  
 That look not like th' inhabitants o' th' earth,  
 And yet are on 't ? Live you ? or are you aught  
 That man may question ? You seem to understand  
 me,

By each at once her chappy finger laying  
 Upon her skinny lips : you should be women,

32. **The weird sisters** = supposed supernatural creatures like the Fates, controlling destiny. Their name is pronounced **wayrd** (ei as in **weight**), and is spelled **weyward** in the folio.

39. **Forres** = a town on Moray Firth, about twenty-five miles from Inverness.



And yet your beards forbid me to interpret  
That you are so.

*Macb.* Speak, if you can : what are you ?

*First Witch.* All hail, Macbeth ! hail to thee, thane  
of Glamis !

*Sec. Witch.* All hail, Macbeth ! hail to thee, thane  
of Cawdor !

*Third Witch.* All hail, Macbeth that shalt be king  
hereafter ! 50

*Ban.* Good sir, why do you start ; and seem to fear  
Things that do sound so fair ? [*To the Witches.*]

I' th' name of truth,  
Are ye fantastical ; or that indeed  
Which outwardly ye show ? My noble partner  
You greet with present grace and great prediction  
Of noble having and of royal hope,  
That he seems rapt withal : to me you speak not.  
If you can look into the seeds of time,  
And say which grain will grow and which will not,  
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear 60  
Your favours nor your hate.

*First Witch.* Hail !

*Sec. Witch.* Hail !

*Third Witch.* Hail !

*First Witch.* Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

*Sec. Witch.* Not so happy, yet much happier.

*Third Witch.* Thou shalt get kings, though thou  
be none :

So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo !

*First Witch.* Banquo and Macbeth, all hail !

*Macb.* Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me  
more : 70

48. **All hail.** These three salutations are almost literal transcripts from Holinshed.

By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis ;  
 But how of Cawdor ? the thane of Cawdor lives,  
 A prosperous gentleman ; and to be king  
 Stands not within the prospect of belief,  
 No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence  
 You owe this strange intelligence ? or why  
 Upon this blasted heath you stop our way  
 With such prophetic greeting ? Speak, I charge you.

[*Witches vanish.*]

*Ban.* The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,  
 And these are of them. Whither are they van-  
 ish'd ?

80

*Macb.* Into the air ; and what seem'd corporal  
 melted  
 As breath into the wind. Would they had stay'd !

*Ban.* Were such things here as we do speak  
 about ?

Or have we eaten on the insane root  
 That takes the reason prisoner ?

*Macb.* Your children shall be kings.

*Ban.* You shall be king.

*Macb.* And thane of Cawdor too : went it not so ?

*Ban.* To the selfsame tune and words. Who's  
 here ?

*Enter Ross and ANGUS.*

*Ross.* The King hath happily received, Macbeth,  
 The news of thy success ; and when he reads  
 Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,  
 His wonders and his praises do contend

90

71. *Sinel* was the name of Macbeth's father.

84. *eaten on* = eaten of. *insane root* = root which makes insanity ; henbane, or perhaps hemlock, if we must read like herb doctors.

Which should be thine or his : silenced with that,  
In viewing o'er the rest o' th' selfsame day,  
He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,  
Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,  
Strange images of death. As thick as tale  
Came post with post ; and every one did bear  
Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence,  
And pour'd them down before him.

*Ang.*

We are sent 100

To give thee from our royal master thanks ;  
Only to herald thee into his sight,  
Not pay thee.

*Ross.* And, for an earnest of a greater honour,  
He bade me, from him, call thee thane of Cawdor :  
In which addition, hail, most worthy thane !  
For it is thine.

*Ban.* [*Aside.*] What, can the Devil speak true ?

*Macb.* The thane of Cawdor lives : why do you  
dress me  
In borrow'd robes ?

*Ang.*

Who was the thane lives yet ;  
But under heavy judgement bears that life 110  
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combined  
With those of Norway, or did line the rebel  
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both

97. *as thick as tale*—as fast as they could be told, or counted ; a somewhat forced comparison, but suited to the style of this play. The reading “As thick as hail” is obvious and plausible.

106. *addition* = title, something added to the mere name ; “a handle.”

107. *Devil* : pronounced commonly, I am sure, in England as well as in Scotland, as a monosyllable, *deel*, in Shakespeare's time.

112. *line* = strengthen.

He labour'd in his country's wrack, I know not ;  
 But treasons capital, confess'd and proved,  
 Have overthrown him.

*Macb.* [*Aside.*] Glamis, and thane of Cawdor !  
 The greatest is behind. [*To Ross and Angus.*]

Thanks for your pains.

[*To Ban.*] Do you not hope your children shall be  
 kings,

When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me  
 Promised no less to them ?

*Ban.*

That trusted home 120

Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,  
 Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 't is strange :  
 And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,  
 The instruments of darkness tell us truths,  
 Win us with honest trifles, to betray 's  
 In deepest consequence.

Cousins, a word, I pray you.

*Macb.*

[*Aside.*] Two truths are told,  
 As happy prologues to the swelling act  
 Of the imperial theme. — I thank you, gentlemen.

[*Aside.*] This supernatural soliciting 130  
 Cannot be ill, cannot be good : if ill,  
 Why hath it given me earnest of success,  
 Commencing in a truth ? — I 'm thane of Cawdor.

If good, why do I yield to that suggestion

Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair

And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,

Against the use of nature ? Present fears

Are less than horrible imaginings :

My thought, whose murther yet is but fantastical,

Shakes so my single state of man that function 140

139. [*Fantastical* = imaginary.]

140-142. *Shakes so . . . what is not* : a passage highly

Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is  
But what is not.

*Ban.* Look, how our partner's rapt.

*Macb.* [*Aside.*] If chance will have me king, why,  
chance may crown me,

Without my stir.

*Ban.* New honours come upon him,  
Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould  
But with the aid of use.

*Macb.* [*Aside.*] Come what come may,  
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

*Ban.* Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.

*Macb.* Give me your favour: my dull brain was  
wrought

With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains <sup>150</sup>  
Are register'd where every day I turn

The leaf to read them. Let us toward the King.

Think upon what hath chanced, and, at more time,

The interim having weigh'd it, let us speak

Our free hearts each to other.

*Ban.* Very gladly.

*Macb.* Till then, enough. Come, friends. [*Exeunt.*]

characteristic of the vague, far-reaching style of this tragedy. **Single** = weak; **function** = ability to act, which is represented as smothered in doubt and apprehension; so that nothing seems to be but that which cannot be.

147. **Time and the hour**: equivalent to "time and tide," in which "tide" does not mean the ebb and flow of the sea, but opportunity, time suitable. [The Clarendon Press editors have the interesting comment, "'Time and the hour,' in the sense of time with its successive incidents, or in its measured course, forms but one idea. The expression seems to have been proverbial. Another form of it is: 'Be the day weary, be the day long, At length it ringeth to evensong.'"]

SCENE IV. *Forres. The palace.*

*Flourish. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, and Attendants.*

*Dun.* Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not Those in commission yet return'd?

*Mal.* My liege,  
They are not yet come back. But I have spoke  
With one that saw him die: who did report  
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons,  
Implored your highness' pardon and set forth  
A deep repentance: nothing in his life  
Became him like the leaving it; he died  
As one that had been studied in his death  
To throw away the dearest thing he owed,  
As 't were a careless trifle.

10

*Dun.* There 's no art  
To find the mind's construction in the face:  
He was a gentleman on whom I built  
An absolute trust.

*Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUS.*

O worthiest cousin!

The sin of my ingratitude even now  
Was heavy on me: thou art so far before  
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow  
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less deserved,  
That the proportion both of thanks and payment  
Might have been mine! only I have left to say,  
More is thy due than more than all can pay.

20

*Macb.* The service and the loyalty I owe,  
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part  
Is to receive our duties; and our duties  
Are to your throne and state children and servants,

10. owed = owned. [Compare Sc. 3, line 76.]

Which do but what they should, by doing every thing  
Safe toward your love and honour.

*Dun.*

Welcome hither :

I have begun to plant thee, and will labour  
To make thee full of growing. Noble Banquo,  
That hast no less deserved, nor must be known 30  
No less to have done so, let me infold thee  
And hold thee to my heart.

*Ban.*

There if I grow,

The harvest is your own.

*Dun.*

My plenteous joys,

Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves  
In drops of sorrow. Sons, kinsmen, thanes,  
And you whose places are the nearest, know  
We will establish our estate upon  
Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter  
The Prince of Cumberland ; which honour must  
Not unaccompanied invest him only, 40  
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine  
On all deservers. From hence to Inverness,  
And bind us further to you.

*Macb.* The rest is labour, which is not used for you :  
I'll be myself the harbinger and make joyful  
The hearing of my wife with your approach ;  
So humbly take my leave.

*Dun.*

My worthy Cawdor !

*Macb.* [*Aside.*] The Prince of Cumberland ! that  
is a step

On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,

34. [**Wanton in fulness** = running to excess in their abundance.]

39. **The Prince of Cumberland.** The crown of Scotland was not at this time strictly hereditary, and when the successor to the reigning king was named he was made Prince of Cumberland.



For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires ; 50  
 Let not light see my black and deep desires :  
 The eye wink at the hand ; yet let that be,  
 Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see. [Exit.

*Dun.* True, worthy Banquo ; he is full so valiant,  
 And in his commendations I am fed ;  
 It is a banquet to me. Let 's after him,  
 Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome :  
 It is a peerless kinsman. [Flourish. Exeunt.

SCENE V. *Inverness.* MACBETH's castle.

*Enter* LADY MACBETH, *reading a letter.*

*Lady M.* They met me in the day of success : and I have learned by the perfectest report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the King, who all-hailed me "Thane of Cawdor;" by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time, with "Hail, king that shalt be !" This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell. 11

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor ; and shalt be  
 What thou art promised : yet do I fear thy nature ;  
 It is too full o' th' milk of human kindness  
 To catch the nearest way : thou wouldst be great,  
 Art not without ambition, but without

54. **True, worthy Banquo.** Duncan's speech is the continuation of an unheard talk with Banquo about Macbeth while the latter reveals to us his awakened ambition and foreshadows the crime.

**Scene V. Enter Lady Macbeth.** In the folio, even after Macbeth is king, she is called merely "the lady," or "Macbeth's lady" or "wife." The title generally given her, however, seems happily chosen.

5. [Missives = messengers.]



The illness should attend it : what thou wouldst highly,  
That wouldst thou holily ; wouldst not play false,  
And yet wouldst wrongly win : thou 'dst have, great  
Glamis,

That which cries “ Thus thou must do, if thou have  
it ; ” 20

And that which rather thou dost fear to do  
Than wishest should be undone. Hie thee hither,  
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear ;  
And chastise with the valour of my tongue  
All that impedes thee from the golden round,  
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem  
To have thee crown'd withal.

*Enter a Messenger.*

What is your tidings?

*Mess.* The King comes here to-night.

*Lady M.*                               Thou 'rt mad to say it:  
Is not thy master with him? who, were 't so,  
Would have inform'd for preparation. 30

*Mess.* So please you, it is true: our thane is coming:

One of my fellows had the speed of him,  
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more  
Than would make up his message.

*Lady M.* Give him tending ;  
He brings great news. [*Exit Messenger.*]

The raven himself is hoarse

That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan  
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits  
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,  
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full  
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;

17. illness = evil nature.

26. metaphysical = more than physical, supernatural.

Stop up the access and passage to remorse,  
 That no compunctious visitings of nature  
 Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between  
 The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,  
 And take my milk for gall, you murth'ring ministers,  
 Wherever in your sightless substances  
 You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,  
 And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,  
 That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,  
 Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark, 50  
 To cry "Hold, hold!"

*Enter MACBETH.*

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!  
 Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!  
 Thy letters have transported me beyond  
 This ignorant present, and I feel now  
 The future in the instant.

*Macb.*

My dearest love,

Duncan comes here to-night.

*Lady M.*

And when goes hence?

*Macb.* To-morrow, as he purposes.

*Lady M.*

O, never

Shall sun that morrow see!

Your face, my thane, is as a book where men

May read strange matters. To beguile the time, 60

43. [Knight points out that "if fear, compassion, or any other compunctious visitings, stand between a cruel purpose and its realization, they may be said to keep peace between them, as one who interferes between a violent man and the object of his wrath keeps peace."]

45. take my milk for gall = change my milk for gall;  
 "unsex me."

54. [Feel is a dissyllable.]

60. [The time: as Delius (quoted by Dr. Furness) has noted, "time with the definite article means in Shakespeare the

Look like the time ; bear welcome in your eye,  
Your hand, your tongue : look like the innocent  
flower,

But be the serpent under 't. He that 's coming  
Must be provided for : and you shall put  
This night's great business into my dispatch ;  
Which shall to all our nights and days to come  
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

*Macb.* We will speak further.

*Lady M.* Only look up clear ;  
To alter favour ever is to fear :  
Leave all the rest to me.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Before MACBETH's castle.*

*Hautboys and torches. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNOX, MACDUFF, ROSS, ANGUS, and Attendants.*

*Dun.* This castle hath a pleasant seat ; the air  
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself  
Unto our gentle senses.

*Ban.* This guest of summer,  
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,  
By his loved masonry, that the heaven's breath  
Smells wooingly here : no jutting, frieze,  
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird  
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle :

present time." Here the sense seems to be, "to beguile those around you at the present time, assume an appearance appropriate to the present time."]

69. [To alter favour = to change countenance. Compare *As You Like It*, Act V. Sc. 4, line 27 ; and *Julius Cæsar* Act I. Sc. 2, line 91.]

5. masonry. The martlet, or martin, builds a nest of mud against walls.

7. coign of vantage : a large phrase for convenient corner.

Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed,  
The air is delicate.

*Enter LADY MACBETH.*

*Dun.* See, see, our honour'd hostess! 10  
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,  
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you  
How you shall bid God 'ild us for your pains,  
And thank us for your trouble.

*Lady M.* All our service  
In every point twice done and then done double  
Were poor and single business to contend  
Against those honours deep and broad wherewith  
Your majesty loads our house: for those of old,  
And the late dignities heap'd up to them,  
We rest your hermits.

*Dun.* Where 's the thane of Cawdor? 20  
We coursed him at the heels, and had a purpose  
To be his purveyor: but he rides well;  
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath hold him  
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,  
We are your guest to-night.

*Lady M.* Your servants ever  
Have theirs, themselves and what is theirs, in compt,

13. **God 'ild** = God yield, God bless.

16. [**Single business**: see Sc. 3, line 140. Mr. White elsewhere remarks that "there is a whimsical likeness and logical connection between this phrase and one which has lately come into vulgar vogue, 'a one-horse affair,' etc."]

20. **your hermits** = those who pray for you.

22. [**Purveyor**: here accented on the first syllable, and equivalent in meaning to "forerunner," in a general sense; as **harbinger** is used in Sc. 4, line 45. Look up the literal meaning in each case.]

26. [**Have . . . in compt** = hold in trust, as things for which they are accountable.]

To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,  
Still to return your own.

*Dun.* Give me your hand  
Conduct me to mine host: we love him highly,  
And shall continue our graces towards him. 30  
By your leave, hostess. [Kissing her. Exeunt.]

SCENE VII. *Corridor in MACBETH's castle.*

*Hautboys and torches. Enter a Sewer, and divers Servants with dishes and service, and pass over the stage. Then enter MACBETH.*

*Macb.* If it were done when 't is done, then 't were well.

It were done quickly if th' assassination  
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch  
With his surcease success; that but this blow  
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,  
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,  
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases  
We still have judgement here; that we but teach  
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return

**Scene VII. Enter a Sewer.** At first a sewer was a taster, to insure protection against poison; afterwards a sort of head groom of the kitchen.

1. [The punctuation here adopted by Mr. White is unusual, though there is much in its favor. The first folio has a comma after **well**, and a colon after **quickly**; modern editors drop the comma. How does the difference in punctuation affect the meaning?]

3. [**trammel up** = catch and hold fast, as in a net. Trammel, noun, = a net.]

4. **surcease** = end. [**His** is the usual possessive in Shakespeare; the pronoun does not necessarily represent Duncan, but "the assassination."]

5. [**success**: this may possibly mean, as Staunton suggests, "that which follows;" in that case, **catch success** would be "no more than an enforcement of 'trammel up the consequence.'"]

To plague the inventor : this even-handed justice 10  
 Commends th' ingredients of our poison'd chalice  
 To our own lips. He's here in double trust ;  
 First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,  
 Strong both against the deed ; then, as his host,  
 Who should against his murderer shut the door,  
 Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan  
 Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been  
 So clear in his great office, that his virtues  
 Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against  
 The deep damnation of his taking-off ; 20  
 And pity, like a naked new-born babe,  
 Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin, horsed  
 Upon the sightless couriers of the air,  
 Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,  
 That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur  
 To prick the sides of my intent, but only  
 Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself  
 And falls on th' other —

*Enter* LADY MACBETH.

How now ! what news ?

*Lady M.* He has almost supp'd : why have you  
 left the chamber ? 29

*Macb.* Hath he ask'd for me ?

13. *his kinsman.* Macbeth and Duncan were first cousins.

22. *cherubin* : so the folio : altered in all modern editions to the Hebrew plural *cherubim*, a word not used by Shakespeare ; and, moreover, the singular, not the plural, form is required.

23. [*couriers of the air.* Is it not possible that Shakespeare wrote "coursers" ? This carries out the idea in *horsed*. It is adopted by Warburton and several other editors. The folio reads "Curriers."]

25. [Two metaphors jostle in lines 25-28 ; first ambition is a spur, then a rider. Read, temporarily, "ambition" after "only," and then again in its right place, and all is clear.]

*Lady M.* Know you not he has ?

*Macb.* We will proceed no further in this business :  
He hath honour'd me of late ; and I have bought  
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,  
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,  
Not cast aside so soon.

*Lady M.* Was the hope drunk  
Wherein you dress'd yourself ? hath it slept since ?  
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale  
At what it did so freely ? From this time  
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard  
To be the same in thine own act and valour 40  
As thou art in desire ? Wouldst thou have that  
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,  
And live a coward in thine own esteem,  
Letting " I dare not " wait upon " I would,"  
Like the poor cat i' th' adage ?

*Macb.* Prithee, peace :  
I dare do all that may become a man ;  
Who dares do more is none.

*Lady M.* What beast was 't, then,  
That made you break this enterprise to me ?  
When you durst do it, then you were a man ;  
And, to be more than what you were, you would 50  
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place  
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both :  
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now  
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know

36. [dress'd = prepared.]

45. *Like the poor cat.* The adage was, "The cat would eat fish, and would not wet her feet."

52. [adhere = cleave to or consist with the plan, so as to make its execution possible.]

54. *I have given suck.* Not to Macbeth's children. The Lady Gruach (that was her name) was a widow when Macbeth married her.



How tender 't is to love the babe that milks me :  
 I would, while it was smiling in my face,  
 Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,  
 And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you  
 Have done to this.

*Macb.* If we should fail?

*Lady M.* We fail!

But screw your courage to the sticking-place, 60  
 And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep —  
 Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey  
 Soundly invite him — his two chamberlains  
 Will I with wine and wassail so convince  
 That memory, the warder of the brain,  
 Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason  
 A limbeck only : when in swinish sleep  
 Their drenched natures lie as in a death,  
 What cannot you and I perform upon  
 The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon 70  
 His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt  
 Of our great quell?

*Macb.* Bring forth men-children only ;  
 For thy undaunted mettle should compose  
 Nothing but males. Will it not be received,  
 When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two  
 Of his own chamber and used their very daggers,  
 That they have done 't?

*Lady M.* Who dares receive it other,  
 As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar  
 Upon his death?

60. [screw your courage : a metaphor presumably taken from the tuning of a stringed instrument. **sticking-place** = place where it will remain fixed.]

64. **convince** = overcome.

66. **receipt** = receptacle.

72. **quell** = to put violently out of the way. Here, used as a noun, it is equivalent to deed of violence.



*Macb.* I am settled, and bend up  
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat. 80  
Away, and mock the time with fairest show :  
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.  
[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT II.

SCENE I. *Court within MACBETH's castle.*

*Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE bearing a torch before him.*

*Ban.* How goes the night, boy?

*Fle.* The moon is down ; I have not heard the  
clock.

*Ban.* And she goes down at twelve.

*Fle.* I take 't, 't is later, sir.

*Ban.* Hold, take my sword. There 's husbandry  
in heaven ;

Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.  
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,  
And yet I would not sleep : merciful powers,  
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature  
Gives way to in repose !

*Enter MACBETH and a Servant with a torch.*

Give me my sword.

Who 's there ?

10

*Macb.* A friend.

*Ban.* What, sir, not yet at rest ? The King 's  
a-bed :

He hath been in unusual pleasure, and  
Sent forth great largess to your offices.  
This diamond he greets your wife withal,

4. husbandry = thrift, saving : we still say "husband your means."

By the name of most kind hostess ; and shut up  
In measureless content.

*Macb.* Being unprepared,  
Our will became the servant to defect ;  
Which else should free have wrought.

*Ban.* All 's well.  
I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters : 20  
To you they have show'd some truth.

*Macb.* I think not of them :  
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,  
We would spend it in some words upon that business,  
If you would grant the time.

*Ban.* At your kind'st leisure.

*Macb.* If you shall cleave to my consort, when 't is,  
It shall make honour for you.

*Ban.* So I lose none  
In seeking to augment it, but still keep  
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,  
I shall be counsell'd.

*Macb.* Good repose the while !

*Ban.* Thanks, sir : the like to you ! 30  
[*Exeunt Banquo and Fleance.*]

*Macb.* Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,  
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

[*Exit Servant.*]

Is this a dagger which I see before me,  
The handle toward my hand ? Come, let me clutch  
thee.

I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.

16. and shut up. This passage is quite surely corrupt, and probably by the loss of a line or more before these words. [The expression doubtless means "concluded."]

25. my consort = those who consort with me, my party. [This emendation is Mr. White's. The first folio reads "consent."]

Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible  
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but  
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,  
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?  
I see thee yet, in form as palpable 40  
As this which now I draw.  
Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;  
And such an instrument I was to use.  
Mine eyes are made the fools o' th' other senses,  
Or else worth all the rest; I see thee still,  
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,  
Which was not so before. There's no such thing:  
It is the bloody business which informs  
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half-world  
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse 50  
The curtain'd sleep; now witchcraft celebrates  
Pale Hecate's offerings, and wither'd murder,  
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,  
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,  
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design  
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm set earth,  
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear  
Thy very stones prate of my whereabout,  
And take the present horror from the time, 59  
Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives:  
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.  
[A bell rings.]  
I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.

46. **dudgeon** = haft, hilt; the root of boxwood, of which dagger handles were made, being called dudgeon, or dudgin. [**gouts** = drops.]

50. [**abuse** = delude.]

54. [**watch**: this evidently means the cry uttered by the watchman at intervals.]

Hear it not, Duncan ; for it is a knell  
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

[Exit.]

## [SCENE II.]

*Enter* LADY MACBETH.

*Lady M.* That which hath made them drunk hath  
made me bold ;  
What hath quench'd them hath given me fire. Hark !  
Peace !

It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,  
Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it :  
The doors are open ; and the surfeited grooms  
Do mock their charge with snores : I have drugg'd  
their possets,  
That death and nature do contend about them,  
Whether they live or die.

*Macb.* [ *Within.* ] Who 's there ? what, ho !

*Lady M.* Alack, I am afraid they have awaked, <sup>10</sup>  
And 't is not done. The attempt, and not the deed,  
Confounds us. Hark ! I laid their daggers ready ;  
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled  
My father as he slept, I had done 't.

*Enter* MACBETH.

My husband !

**Scene II.** The folio has here *Scena Secunda*, and on the entrance of the Porter *Scena Tertia*. But the proper effect of this grand action is lost, unless it is imagined, as Shakespeare imagined it, as continuous and in one spot. For convenience' sake, however, the old divisions are indicated, and the lines of the scenes are numbered accordingly.

3. [bellman: the common bellman was usually sent to condemned persons the night before their execution; hence the present epithet "fatal."]

*Macb.* I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear  
a noise?

*Lady M.* I heard the owl scream and the crickets  
cry.

Did not you speak?

*Macb.* When?

*Lady M.* Now.

*Macb.* As I descended?

*Lady M.* Ay.

*Macb.* Hark!

Who lies i' th' second chamber?

*Lady M.* Donalbain. 20

*Macb.* This is a sorry sight. [*Looking on his hands.*]

*Lady M.* A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

*Macb.* There 's one did laugh in 's sleep, and one  
cried "Murther!"

That they did wake each other: I stood and heard  
them:

But they did say their prayers, and address'd them  
Again to sleep.

*Lady M.* There are two lodged together.

*Macb.* One cried "God bless us!" and "Amen"  
the other,

As they had seen me with these hangman's hands,  
Listening their fear. — I could not say "Amen,"

When they did say "God bless us!"

*Lady M.* Consider it not so deeply.

*Macb.* But wherefore could not I pronounce  
"Amen"? 31

I had most need of blessing, and "Amen"  
Stuck in my throat.

*Lady M.* These deeds must not be thought  
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

*Macb.* Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no  
more!

Macbeth does murther sleep," — the innocent sleep,  
 Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,  
 The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,  
 Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,  
 Chief nourisher in life's feast, —

*Lady M.* What do you mean? 40

*Macb.* Still it cried "Sleep no more!" to all the  
 house :

"Glamis hath murther'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor  
 Shall sleep no more ; Macbeth shall sleep no more."

*Lady M.* Who was it that thus cried? Why,  
 worthy thane,

You do unbend your noble strength, to think  
 So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,  
 And wash this filthy witness from your hand.  
 Why did you bring these daggers from the place?  
 They must lie there : go carry them ; and smear  
 The sleepy grooms with blood.

*Macb.* I'll go no more : 50

I am afraid to think what I have done ;  
 Look on 't again I dare not.

*Lady M.* Infirm of purpose !

Give me the daggers : the sleeping and the dead  
 Are but as pictures : 't is the eye of childhood  
 That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,  
 I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal ;  
 For it must seem their guilt. [Exit. Knocking within.]

37. [ravell'd sleeve : this is the folio reading. Seward suggested "sleave," which has since been frequently adopted. It is preferred by Dr. Furness. *Sleave* = coarse, soft, unwrought silk. (Malone.) If this suggestion be accepted, it is necessary to understand ravell'd as meaning "tangled." Analyze the metaphor in each of these two readings; in which case is it more illustrative ?]

*Macb.* Whence is that knocking?  
How is 't with me, when every noise appals me?  
What hands are here? ha! they pluck out mine eyes.  
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood 60  
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather  
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,  
Making the green one red.

*Re-enter LADY MACBETH.*

*Lady M.* My hands are of your colour; but I shame  
To wear a heart so white. [*Knocking within.*] I  
hear a knocking

At the south entry: retire we to our chamber:  
A little water clears us of this deed:  
How easy is it, then! Your constancy  
Hath left you unattended. [*Knocking within.*]  
Hark! more knocking.

Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us, 70  
And show us to be watchers. Be not lost  
So poorly in your thoughts.

*Macb.* To know my deed, 't were best not know  
myself. [*Knocking within.*]  
Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou  
couldst! [*Exeunt.*]

[SCENE III.]

*Knocking continued. Enter a Porter.*

*Porter.* Here 's a knocking indeed! If a man  
were porter of hell-gate, he should have old turning

62. [*The multitudinous seas* : note the hurrying, crowded effect of this epithet, and the deep sigh or moan that seems to sound through *incarnadine*. Both elements of our noble language are valuable; the Saxon is sometimes overpraised, at the expense of the Latin. Try to produce the effect of this magnificent line with pure Saxon words. *incarnadine* = to dye red.]

2. *old* : constantly used as a term of intensification or exaggeration.

the key. [*Knocking.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who 's there, i' th' name of Beelzebub? Here 's a farmer, that hang'd himself on the expectation of plenty: come in time; have napkins enow about you; here you 'll sweat for 't. [*Knocking.*] Knock, knock! Who's there, in the other devil's name? Faith, here 's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven: O, come in, equivocator. [*Knocking.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who 's there? Faith, here 's an English tailor come hither, for stealing out of a French hose: come in, tailor; here you may roast your goose. [*Knocking.*] Knock, knock; never at quiet! What are you? But this place is too cold for hell. I 'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to have let in some of all professions that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire. [*Knocking.*] Anon, anon. I pray you, remember the porter. [*Opens the gate.*]

*Enter MACDUFF and LENNOX.*

*Macd.* Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed, That you do lie so late?

*Port.* 'Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock.

*Macd.* Is thy master stirring?

*Enter MACBETH.*

Our knocking has awaked him; here he comes.

*Len.* Good morrow, noble sir.

*Macb.* Good morrow, both.

*Macd.* Is the King stirring, worthy thane?

*Macb.* Not yet. <sup>30</sup>

*Macd.* He did command me to call timely on him: I have almost slipp'd the hour.



*Macb.* I'll bring you to him.

*Macd.* I know this is a joyful trouble to you ;  
But yet 't is one.

*Macb.* The labour we delight in physics pain.  
This is the door.

*Macd.* I'll make so bold to call,  
For 't is my limited service. [Exit.

*Len.* Goes the King hence to-day ?

*Macb.* He does : he did appoint so.

*Len.* The night has been unruly : where we lay,  
Our chimneys were blown down ; and, as they say, <sup>40</sup>  
Lamentings heard i' th' air ; strange screams of death,  
And prophesying with accents terrible  
Of dire combustion and confused events  
New hatch'd to the woeful time : the obscure bird  
Clamour'd the livelong night : some say, the earth  
Was feverous and did shake.

*Macb.* 'T was a rough night.

*Len.* My young remembrance cannot parallel  
A fellow to it.

*Re-enter MACDUFF.*

*Macd.* O horror, horror, horror ! Tongue nor heart  
Cannot conceive nor name thee !

*Macb.* } • What 's the matter ? <sup>50</sup>

*Len.* }

*Macd.* Confusion now hath made his master-piece !  
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope  
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence  
The life o' th' building !

*Macb.* What is 't you say ? the life ?

*Len.* Mean you his majesty ?

*Macd.* Approach the chamber, and destroy your  
sight

With a new Gorgon : do not bid me speak ;  
See, and then speak yourselves. [*Exeunt Macbeth and Lennox.*]

Awake, awake !

Ring the alarum-bell. Murther and treason !  
Banquo and Donalbain ! Malcolm ! awake ! 60  
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,  
And look on death itself ! up, up, and see  
The great doom's image ! Malcolm ! Banquo !  
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,  
To countenance this horror ! Ring the bell. [*Bell rings.*]

*Enter LADY MACBETH.*

*Lady M.* What 's the business,  
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley  
The sleepers of the house ? speak, speak !

*Macd.* O gentle lady,  
'T is not for you to hear what I can speak :  
The repetition, in a woman's ear, 70  
Would murther as it fell.

*Enter BANQUO.*

O Banquo, Banquo,  
Our royal master's murther'd !

*Lady M.* Woe, alas !  
What, in our house ?

*Ban.* Too cruel any where.  
Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,  
And say it is not so.

*Re-enter MACBETH and LENNOX, with ROSS.*

*Macb.* Had I but died an hour before this chance,  
I had lived a blessed time ; for, from this instant,  
There's nothing serious in mortality :  
All is but toys : renown and grace is dead ;  
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees 80  
Is left this vault to brag of.

*Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.*

*Don.* What is amiss?

*Macb.* You are, and do not know 't:  
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood  
Is stopp'd; the very source of it is stopp'd.

*Macd.* Your royal father's murder'd.

*Mal.* O, by whom?

*Len.* Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had  
done 't:

Their hands and faces were all badged with blood;  
So were their daggers, which unwiped we found  
Upon their pillows:  
They stared, and were distracted; no man's life 90  
Was to be trusted with them.

*Macb.* O, yet I do repent me of my fury,  
That I did kill them.

*Macd.* Wherefore did you so?

*Macb.* Who can be wise, amazed, temp'rate and  
furious,  
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man:  
The expedition of my violent love  
Outrun the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,  
His silver skin laced with his golden blood;  
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature  
For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,  
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers 101  
Unmannerly breech'd with gore: who could refrain,  
That had a heart to love, and in that heart  
Courage to make 's love known?

*Lady M.* Help me hence, ho!

*Macd.* Look to the lady.

87. [badged = wearing "murder's crimson badge." (2 Henry VI. Act III. Sc. 2.)]

*Mal.* [*Aside to Don.*] Why do we hold our  
tongues,  
That most may claim this argument for ours?

*Don.* [*Aside to Mal.*] What should be spoken  
here, where our fate,  
Hid in an auger-hole, may rush, and seize us?  
Let's away.

Our tears are not yet brew'd.

*Mal.* [*Aside to Don.*] Nor our strong sorrow 110  
Upon the foot of motion.

*Ban.* Look to the lady:

[*Lady Macbeth is carried out.*]

And when we have our naked frailties hid,  
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,  
And question this most bloody piece of work,  
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us:  
In the great hand of God I stand; and thence  
Against the undivulged pretence I fight  
Of treasonous malice.

*Macd.* And so do I.

*All.* So all.

*Macb.* Let's briefly put on manly readiness,  
And meet i' th' hall together.

*All.* Well contented. 120

[*Exeunt all but Malcolm and Donalbain.*]

*Mal.* What will you do? Let's not consort with  
them:

To show an unfelt sorrow is an office  
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

*Don.* To Ireland, I; our separated fortune  
Shall keep us both the safer: where we are,  
There's daggers in men's smiles: the near in blood,  
The nearer bloody.

*Mal.* This murtherous shaft that 's shot  
 Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way  
 Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse;  
 And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,  
 But shift away: there 's warrant in that theft  
 Which steals itself, when there 's no mercy left.

130

[*Exeunt.*]SCENE II. *Outside MACBETH's castle.*

[SCENE IV., in the folio of 1623.]

*Enter Ross and an old Man.*

*Old M.* Threescore and ten I can remember well:  
 Within the volume of which time I have seen  
 Hours dreadful and things strange; but this sore  
 night  
 Hath trifled former knowings.

*Ross.* Ah, good father,  
 Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's act,  
 Threaten his bloody stage: by th' clock, 't is day,  
 And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp:  
 Is 't night's predominance, or the day's shame,  
 That darkness does the face of earth entomb,  
 When living light should kiss it?

*Old M.* 'T is unnatural, 10  
 Even like the deed that 's done. On Tuesday last,  
 A falcon, tow'ring in her pride of place,  
 Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

*Ross.* And Duncan's horse — a thing most strange  
 and certain —

7. **strangles the travelling lamp** = obscures the sun.

12. [**tow'ring . . . place**: technical terms of falconry, equivalent to "soaring (proudly) to the highest point of her flight." Why has **mouseing**, in the next line, a special force?]

14. [**horse**: the folio has "horses." If Mr. White's conjecture be correct, this is the old plural, as in Chaucer.] See also Act IV. Sc. 1, line 140.

Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,  
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,  
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make  
War with mankind.

*Old M.* 'T is said they eat each other.

*Ross.* They did so, to the amazement of mine eyes  
That look'd upon 't. Here comes the good Macduff.

*Enter MACDUFF.*

How goes the world, sir, now ?

*Macd.* Why, see you not ? 21

*Ross.* Is 't known who did this more than bloody  
deed ?

*Macd.* Those that Macbeth hath slain.

*Ross.* Alas, the day !

What good could they pretend ?

*Macd.* They were suborn'd :  
Malcolm and Donalbain, the King's two sons,  
Are stol'n away and fled ; which puts upon them  
Suspicion of the deed.

*Ross.* 'Gainst nature still !  
Thrifless ambition, that wilt ravin up  
Thine own life's means ! Then 't is most like  
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth. 30

*Macd.* He is already named, and gone to Scone  
To be invested.

15. **minions** = cherished favorites.

18. **eat each other.** We should probably read **ate**; and indeed **eat** and **ate** were pronounced alike. This story about the horses is from Holinshed ; and so also is what is told about the tempestuous weather.

24. **pretend** = purpose, seek.

28. **ravin** = eat greedily: whence "ravenous."

31. **Scone**: an ancient town near Perth, now obliterated. The stone on which the kings of Scotland were crowned is now enclosed in the coronation chair at Westminster Abbey.

*Ross.* Where is Duncan's body ?

*Macd.* Carried to Colmekill,  
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,  
And guardian of their bones.

*Ross.* Will you to Scone ?

*Macd.* No, cousin, I'll to Fife.

*Ross.* Well, I will thither.

*Macd.* Well, may you see things well done there :  
adieu !

Lest our old robes sit easier than our new !

*Ross.* Farewell, father.

*Old M.* God's benison go with you ; and with  
those

40

That would make good of bad, and friends of foes !

[*Exeunt.*

### ACT III.

SCENE I. *Forres. The palace.*

*Enter BANQUO.*

*Ban.* Thou hast it now : king, Cawdor, Glamis,  
all,

As the weird women promised, and, I fear,  
Thou play'dst most foully for't : yet it was said  
It should not stand in thy posterity,  
But that myself should be the root and father  
Of many kings. If there come truth from them —  
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine —

33. **Colmekill**, or **Ilcolmkill**, a barren isle, generally known as **Iona**, is a few miles south of **Staffa**. It became, by means of **St. Columba** and the monastery he founded there in the middle of the sixth century, the birthplace of Christianity in Scotland. Hence it was supposed to be holy ground ; and hence the kings of Scotland were entombed there.

Why, by the verities on thee made good,  
 May they not be my oracles as well,  
 And set me up in hope? But hush! no more. 10

*Sennet sounded. Enter MACBETH, as king, LADY MACBETH, as queen,  
 LENNOX, ROSS, Lords, Ladies, and Attendants.*

*Macb.* Here 's our chief guest.

*Lady M.* If he had been forgotten,  
 It had been as a gap in our great feast,  
 And all-thing unbecoming.

*Macb.* To-night we hold a solemn supper, sir,  
 And I 'll request your presence.

*Ban.* Lay your highness'  
 Command upon me; to the which my duties  
 Are with a most indissoluble tie  
 For ever knit.

*Macb.* Ride you this afternoon?

*Ban.* Ay, my good lord. 20

*Macb.* We should have else desired your good  
 advice,  
 Which still hath been both grave and prosperous,  
 In this day's council; but we 'll take to-morrow.  
 Is 't far you ride?

*Ban.* As far, my lord, as will fill up the time  
 'Twixt this and supper: go not my horse the better,  
 I must become a borrower of the night  
 For a dark hour or twain.

*Macb.* Fail not our feast.

*Ban.* My lord, I will not.

*Macb.* We hear, our bloody cousins are bestow'd 30  
 In England and in Ireland, not confessing  
 Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers  
 With strange invention: but of that to-morrow,  
 When therewithal we shall have cause of state



Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse: adieu,  
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

*Ban.* Ay, my good lord: our time does call upon 's.

*Macb.* I wish your horses swift and sure of foot;  
And so I do commend you to their backs.

Farewell.

[*Exit Banquo.*

Let every man be master of his time

41

Till seven at night. To make society

The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself

Till supper-time alone: while then, God be with you!

[*Exeunt all but Macbeth, and an Attendant.*

Sirrah, a word with you: attend those men

Our pleasure?

*Atten.* They are, my lord, without the palace gate.

*Macb.* Bring them before us.

[*Exit Attendant.*

To be thus is nothing;

But to be safely thus. — Our fears in Banquo

Stick deep; and in his royalty of nature

50

Reigns that which would be fear'd: 't is much he  
dares;

And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,

He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour

To act in safety. There is none but he

Whose being I do fear: and, under him,

My Genius is rebuked; as, it is said,

Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the sisters

When first they put the name of king upon me,

And bade them speak to him: then prophet-like

They hail'd him father to a line of kings:

60

Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,

And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,

Thence to be wretch'd with an unlineal hand,

No son of mine succeeding. If 't be so,

For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind ;  
 For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd ;  
 Put rancours in the vessel of my peace  
 Only for them ; and mine eternal jewel  
 Given to the common enemy of man,  
 To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings ! 70  
 Rather than so, come fate into the list,  
 And champion me to th' utterance ! Who 's there ?

*Re-enter Attendant, with two Murderers.*

Now go to the door, and stay there till we call.

*[Exit Attendant.]*

Was it not yesterday we spoke together ?

*First Mur.* It was, so please your highness.

*Macb.*

Well then, now

Have you consider'd of my speeches ? Know  
 That it was he in the times past which held you  
 So under fortune, which you thought had been  
 Our innocent self : this I made good to you  
 In our last conference, pass'd in probation with you, 80  
 How you were borne in hand, how cross'd, the instru-  
 ments,  
 Who wrought with them, and all things else that  
 might

To half a soul and to a notion crazed

Say " Thus did Banquo."

*First Mur.*

You made it known to us.

*Macb.* I did so, and went further, which is now  
 Our point of second meeting. Do you find  
 Your patience so predominant in your nature

65. **filed** = fouled, defiled.

68. **eternal jewel** = immortal soul.

72. **utterance** = outer-ance = *outrance*. A combat à l'*outrance*  
 was one to the uttermost end, death.

81. **borne in hand** = kept up by promises.

That you can let this go ? Are you so gossell'd  
To pray for this good man and for his issue,  
Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave 90  
And beggar'd yours for ever ?

*First Mur.*

We are men, my liege.

*Macb.* Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men ;  
As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,  
Shoughs, water-rugs and demi-wolves, are clept  
All by the name of dogs : the valued file  
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,  
The housekeeper, the hunter, every one  
According to the gift which bounteous nature  
Hath in him closed ; whereby he does receive  
Particular addition, from the bill 100  
That writes them all alike : and so of men.  
Now, if you have a station in the file,  
Not i' th' worst rank of manhood, say't ;  
And I will put that business in your bosoms,  
Whose execution takes your enemy off,  
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,  
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,  
Which in his death were perfect.

*Sec. Mur.*

I am one, my liege,

Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world  
Have so incensed that I am reckless what 110  
I do to spite the world.

*First Mur.*

And I another

So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,

94. [Shoughs (shocks) and water-rugs were shaggy dogs.]  
clept = cleped = called ; from A. S. *cleopian*.

95. valued file = the graded file, file on which value as well  
as name is entered.

100. Particular addition = a name or title belonging par-  
ticularly to him.

That I would set my life on any chance,  
To mend it, or be rid on 't.

*Macb.*

Both of you

Know Banquo was your enemy.

*Both Mur.*

True, my lord.

*Macb.* So is he mine ; and in such bloody distance,  
That every minute of his being thrusts  
Against my near'st of life : and though I could  
With barefaced power sweep him from my sight  
And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not, 120  
For certain friends that are both his and mine,  
Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall  
Who I myself struck down ; and thence it is,  
That I to your assistance do make love,  
Masking the business from the common eye  
For sundry weighty reasons.

*Sec. Mur.*

We shall, my lord,

Perform what you command us.

*First Mur.*

Though our lives —

*Macb.* Your spirits shine through you. Within  
this hour at most,  
I will advise you where to plant yourselves ;  
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' th' time, 130  
The moment on 't ; for 't must be done to-night,  
And something from the palace ; always thought

116. [Dyce notes that **distance** “was a fencing term, denoting the space between antagonists.” This makes the metaphor in thrusts quite clear.]

130. **spy o' th' time** = anticipatory knowledge of the time. Dr. Johnson read “a perfect spy,” and understood “with” to mean “by” and “spy” to refer to the third murderer, who appears in Sc. 3 of this act, — a very plausible interpretation, which I once adopted ; but the former is much better suited to Shakespeare, and particularly to the style of this play.

132. **always thought . . . clearness.** Here language is

That I require a clearness : and with him —  
To leave no rubs nor botches in the work —  
Fleance his son, that keeps him company,  
Whose absence is no less material to me  
Than is his father's, must embrace the fate  
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart :  
I'll come to you anon.

*Both Mur.* We are resolved, my lord.

*Macb.* I'll call upon you straight : abide within. 140  
[*Exeunt Murderers.*]

It is concluded. Banquo, thy soul's flight,  
If it find heaven, must find it out to-night. [Exit.]

SCENE II. *The palace.*

*Enter LADY MACBETH and a Servant.*

*Lady M.* Is Banquo gone from court ?

*Serv.* Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.

*Lady M.* Say to the King, I would attend his  
leisure

For a few words.

*Serv.* Madam, I will. [Exit.]

*Lady M.* Nought's had, all's spent,  
Where our desire is got without content :  
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy  
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

*Enter MACBETH.*

How now, my lord ! why do you keep alone,  
Of sorriest fancies your companions making,  
Using those thoughts which should indeed have died 10

strained to the utmost to put briefly and rhythmically what  
Holinshed says thus : "so that he would not have his house  
slaughtered, but that in time to come he might clear himself."

With them they think on ? Things without all remedy  
Should be without regard : what's done is done.

*Macb.* We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it :  
She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice  
Remains in danger of her former tooth.  
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds  
suffer,

Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep  
In the affliction of these terrible dreams  
That shake us nightly. Better be with the dead,  
Whom we, to gain our place, have sent to peace, 20  
Than on the torture of the mind to lie  
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave ;  
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well ;  
Treason has done his worst : nor steel, nor poison,  
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,  
Can touch him further.

*Lady M.* Come on ;  
Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks ;  
Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night.

*Macb.* So shall I, love ; and so, I pray, be you :  
Let your remembrance apply to Banquo ; 30  
Present him eminence, both with eye and tongue :  
Unsafe the while, that we . . .

11. **without all remedy** = outside of, beyond, all remedy.

13. **scotch'd** = cut, but not cut quite through; a word which should not need a gloss in New England.

20. **our place.** The folio, "our peace;" but Macbeth had killed no one *yet* for peace' sake. He killed Duncan for his place.

22. [**ecstasy**: in Shakespeare this signifies any intense excitement, whether painful or pleasurable.]

30. **remembrance**: to be pronounced **rememberance**; and perhaps should be so printed.

32. **Unsafe the while**, etc.: a mutilated line: the missing phrase meaning, probably, "for safety's sake."

Must lave our honours in these flattering streams,  
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,  
Disguising what they are.

*Lady M.* You must leave this.

*Macb.* O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!  
Thou know'st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.

*Lady M.* But in them nature's copy's not eterne.

*Macb.* There's comfort yet; they are assailable;  
Then be thou jocund: ere the bat hath flown 40  
His cloister'd flight, ere to black Hecate's summons  
The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums  
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done  
A deed of dreadful note.

*Lady M.* What's to be done?

*Macb.* Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,  
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,  
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;  
And with thy bloody and invisible hand  
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond  
Which keeps me pale! Light thickens; and the  
crow 50

Makes wing to the rooky wood:  
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;  
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.  
Thou marvell'st at my words: but hold thee still:

38. *nature's copy* = the likeness of nature, their natural lives; but some critics would have a legal meaning, and refer "copy" to copyhold.

42. *shard-borne* = borne on his shard wings. *Shard* = a thin, brittle substance; for example pot-sherd.

46. *seeling* = blinding; a term of falconry. One part of the training of hawks was to sew up, or seel, their eyes.

49. [*that great bond*: evidently Banquo's life. Compare *Richard III.* Act IV. Sc. 4: "Cancel his bond of life." Is not this related to *nature's copy*, line 38?]



Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.

So, prithee, go with me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *A park near the palace.*

*Enter three Murderers.*

*First Mur.* But who did bid thee join with us?

*Third Mur.*

Macbeth.

*Sec. Mur.* He needs not our mistrust, since he delivers

Our offices and what we have to do

To the direction just.

*First Mur.*

Then stand with us.

The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day :

Now spurs the lated traveller apace

To gain the timely inn ; and near approaches

The subject of our watch.

*Third Mur.*

Hark ! I hear horses.

*Ban.* [*Within.*] Give us a light there, ho !

*Sec. Mur.*

Then 't is he : the rest

That are within the note of expectation

10

Already are i' th' court.

*First Mur.*

His horses go about.

*Third Mur.* Almost a mile : but he does usually,

So all men do, from hence to the palace gate

Make it their walk.

*Sec. Mur.*

A light, a light !

*Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE with a torch.*

*Third Mur.*

'T is he.

*First Mur.* Stand to 't.

*Ban.* It will be rain to-night.

*First Mur.*

Let it come down.

[*They set upon Banquo.*]

*Ban.* O, treachery ! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly !

Thou mayst revenge. O slave ! [*Dies. Fleance escapes.*]



*Third Mur.* Who did strike out the light?

*First Mur.* Was 't not the way?

*Third Mur.* There 's but one down; the son is fled.

*Sec. Mur.* We have lost  
Best half of our affair. 21

*First Mur.* Well, let 's away, and say how much is done.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The same. Hall in the palace.*

*A banquet prepared. Enter MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSS, LENNOX, Lords, and Attendants.*

*Macb.* You know your own degrees; sit down: at first  
And last the hearty welcome.

*Lords.* Thanks to your majesty.

*Macb.* Ourself will mingle with society,  
And play the humble host.  
Our hostess keeps her state, but in best time  
We will require her welcome.

*Lady M.* Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends;  
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

*First Murderer appears at the door.*

*Macb.* See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks.

Both sides are even: here I 'll sit i' th' midst: 10  
Be large in mirth; anon we 'll drink a measure  
The table round. [*Approaching the door.*] There 's  
blood upon thy face.

*Mur.* 'T is Banquo's then.

5. *her state* = her place of state, a canopied chair on a dais.

*Macb.* 'T is better thee without than he within.  
Is he dispatch'd?

*Mur.* My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.

*Macb.* Thou art the best o' th' cut-throats: yet  
he 's good  
That did the like for Fleance: if thou didst it,  
Thou art the nonpareil.

*Mur.* Most royal sir,  
Fleance is 'scaped.

20

*Macb.* Then comes my fit again: I had else been  
perfect,  
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,  
As broad and general as the casing air:  
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in  
To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe?

*Mur.* Ay, my good lord: safe in a ditch he bides,  
With twenty trenched gashes on his head;  
The least a death to nature.

*Macb.* Thanks for that:  
There the grown serpent lies; the worm that 's fled  
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,  
No teeth for the present. Get thee gone: to-morrow  
We'll hear ourselves again.

30

[Exit Murderers.]

*Lady M.* My royal lord,  
You do not give the cheer: the feast is sold  
That is not often vouch'd, while 't is a-making,  
'T is given with welcome: to feed were best at home;  
From thence the sauce to meat is ceremony;  
Meeting were bare without it.

*Macb.* Sweet remembrancer!  
Now, good digestion wait on appetite,  
And health on both!

14. **than he within**: carelessly written for "than him," etc.

23. **casing** = encompassing.

*Len.* May 't please your highness sit.

[*The Ghost of Banquo enters, and sits in Macbeth's place.*]

*Macb.* Here had we now our country's honour  
roof'd, 40

Were the graced person of our Banquo present,  
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness  
Than pity for mischance, —

*Ross.* His absence, sir,

Lays blame upon his promise. Please 't your high-  
ness

To grace us with your royal company.

*Macb.* The table 's full.

*Len.* Here is a place reserved, sir.

*Macb.* Where?

*Len.* Here, my good lord. What is 't that moves  
your highness?

*Macb.* Which of you have done this?

*Lords.* What, my good lord?

*Macb.* Thou canst not say I did it: never shake 50  
Thy gory locks at me.

*Ross.* Gentlemen, rise: his highness is not well.

*Lady M.* Sit, worthy friends: my lord is often  
thus,

And hath been from his youth: pray you, keep seat;  
The fit is momentary; upon a thought  
He will again be well: if much you note him,  
You shall offend him and extend his passion:  
Feed, and regard him not. [*Aside to Macbeth.*] Are  
you a man?

57. *passion* = suffering.

58. *Are you a man?* This and Lady Macbeth's three following speeches are hurried under-breath expostulations with her husband; but his speeches in reply are spoken only with the restraint of terror. At line 83 she addresses him in her society way, and he so answers.

*Macb.* Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that  
Which might appal the devil.

*Lady M.* [*Aside to Macbeth.*] O proper stuff! 60  
This is the very painting of your fear:  
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,  
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts,  
Impostors to true fear, would well become  
A woman's story at a winter's fire,  
Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!  
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,  
You look but on a stool.

*Macb.* Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo! how  
say you?  
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too. 70  
If charnel-houses and our graves must send  
Those that we bury back, our monuments  
Shall be the maws of kites. [*Ghost vanishes.*]

*Lady M.* [*Aside to Macbeth.*] What, quite un-  
mann'd in folly?

*Macb.* If I stand here, I saw him.

*Lady M.* [*Aside to Macbeth.*] Fie, for shame!

*Macb.* Blood hath been shed ere now, i' th' olden  
time,  
Ere human statute purged the gentle weal;  
Ay, and since too, murthers have been perform'd  
Too terrible for the ear: the time has been,  
That, when the brains were out, the man would die,  
And there an end; but now they rise again, 80

63. [flaws = sudden gusts.]

66. [Read autho'rized.]

76. [human statute : the folio reads "humane," which Shakespeare accented on the first syllable. The meaning in this passage would be nearly the same. **weal** = commonweal, as throughout the play; **gentle**, as the Clarendon Press editors have pointed out, is of course to be taken proleptically.]

With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,  
And push us from our stools: this is more strange  
Than such a murder is.

*Lady M.* My worthy lord,  
Your noble friends do lack you.

*Macb.* I do forget.  
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends;  
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing  
To those that know me. Come, love and health to  
all;

Then I'll sit down. Give me some wine; fill full.  
I drink to the general joy o' th' whole table,  
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss; 90  
Would he were here! to all, and him, we thirst,  
And all to all.

*Lords.* Our duties, and the pledge.

*Re-enter Ghost.*

*Macb.* Avaunt! and quit my sight! let the earth  
hide thee!

Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;  
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes  
Which thou dost glare with!

*Lady M.* Think of this, good peers,  
But as a thing of custom: 't is no other;  
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

*Macb.* What man dare, I dare:  
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear, 100  
The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger;  
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves

81. **twenty mortal murders.** Quite probably Shakespeare meant to write, possibly did write, "twenty mortal *gashes*." See line 27.

101. **Hyrcan tiger.** Hyrcania was a part of the Scythian wild, south of the Caspian Sea,

Shall never tremble : or be alive again,  
 And dare me to the desert with thy sword ;  
 If trembling I inhabit then, protest me  
 The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow !  
 Unreal mockery, hence ! [Ghost vanishes.]

Why, so : being gone,  
 I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.

*Lady M.* You have displaced the mirth, broke the  
 good meeting,  
 With most admired disorder.

*Macb.* Can such things be, 110  
 And overcome us like a summer's cloud,  
 Without our special wonder ? You make me strange  
 Even to the disposition that I owe,  
 When now I think you can behold such sights,  
 And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,  
 When mine is blanch'd with fear.

*Ross.* What sights, my lord ?

*Lady M.* I pray you, speak not ; he grows worse  
 and worse ;  
 Question enrages him. At once, good night :  
 Stand not upon the order of your going,  
 But go at once.

*Len.* Good night ; and better health 120  
 Attend his majesty !

*Lady M.* A kind good night to all !

[Exeunt all but Macbeth and Lady M.]

105. **If trembling**, etc. This may mean either "If I then dwell, exist, in trembling" (as in "Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel," Psalm xxii. 3), or, "If I then keep within my house and dare not meet thee in the desert."

106. [**baby** : it is possible that this means doll. Mr. White elsewhere remarks, "Girls still retain this use of the word in 'baby-house.'"]

110. **admired** = wondered at.

*Macb.* It will have blood ; they say, blood will  
have blood :

Stones have been known to move and trees to speak ;  
Auguries and understood relations have  
By magot-pies and choughs and rooks brought forth  
The secret'st man of blood. What is the night ?

*Lady M.* Almost at odds with morning, which is  
which.

*Macb.* How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his  
person

At our great bidding ?

*Lady M.* Did you send to him, sir ?

*Macb.* I hear it by the way ; but I will send : 130  
There's not a man of them but in his house  
I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow,  
And betimes I will, to the weird sisters :  
More shall they speak ; for now I am bent to know,  
By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good,  
All causes shall give way : I am in blood  
Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,  
Returning were as tedious as go o'er :  
Strange things I have in head, that will to hand ;  
Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd. 140

*Lady M.* You lack the season of all natures, sleep.

*Macb.* Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-  
abuse

Is the initiate fear that wants hard use :

We are yet but young in deed.

[*Exeunt.*

125. magot-pies = magpies.

131. **There's not a man** : from Holinshed : "For Makbeth had in every noble man's house one slie fellow or other in fee with him."

142. [**self-abuse** = delusion "proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain."]



SCENE V. *A heath.*

*Thunder. Enter the three Witches, meeting HECATE.*

*First Witch.* Why, how now, Hecate! you look  
angrily.

*Hec.* Have I not reason, beldams as you are,  
Saucy and overbold? How did you dare  
To trade and traffic with Macbeth  
In riddles and affairs of death;  
And I, the mistress of your charms,  
The close contriver of all harms,  
Was never call'd to bear my part,  
Or show the glory of our art?  
And, which is worse, all you have done 10  
Hath been but for a wayward son,  
Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do,  
Loves for his own ends, not for you.  
But make amends now: get you gone,  
And at the pit of Acheron  
Meet me i' th' morning: thither he  
Will come to know his destiny:  
Your vessels and your spells provide,  
Your charms and every thing beside.  
I am for the air; this night I'll spend 20  
Unto a dismal and a fatal end:  
Great business must be wrought ere noon:  
Upon the corner of the moon  
There hangs a vaporous drop profound;  
I'll catch it ere it come to ground:  
And that distill'd by magic sleights

1. **Hecate**: properly pronounced *Hec-at-e*, but here *Hec-at*.  
A mysterious and even now little understood goddess of the  
heathen mythology; a "contriver of all harms."

15. **Acheron**: a river in Hades, here made a pit in Scotland.



Shall raise such artificial sprites  
 As by the strength of their illusion  
 Shall draw him on to his confusion :  
 He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear  
 His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace and fear :  
 And you all know, security  
 Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

30

[*Music, and a song within* : "Come away, come away," etc.  
 Hark ! I am call'd ; my little spirit, see,  
 Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me. [*Exit.*

*First Witch.* Come, let 's make haste ; she 'll soon  
 be back again. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Forres. The palace.*

*Enter LENNOX and another Lord.*

*Len.* My former speeches have but hit your  
 thoughts,  
 Which can interpret further : only, I say,  
 Things have been strangely borne. The gracious  
 Duncan  
 Was pitied of Macbeth : marry, he was dead :  
 And the right-valiant Banquo walk'd too late ;  
 Whom, you may say, if 't please you, Fleance kill'd,  
 For Fleance fled : men must not walk too late.  
 Who cannot want the thought how monstrous  
 It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain  
 To kill their gracious father ? damned fact ! 10

**Music and a song**, etc. The song (which the folio stage direction calls for) is found in Middleton's *Witch*. It is a part song ; Hecate being principal. See Introduction.

3. [*borne* = carried on, managed.]

8. **Who cannot want**, etc. Shakespeare meant "Who can want," etc.: an example of heterophemy. [*monstrous* : a tri-syllable.]

10. [*fact* = deed, thing done (applied by Shakespeare to evil deeds.)]

How it did grieve Macbeth ! did he not straight  
 In pious rage the two delinquents tear,  
 That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep ?  
 Was not that nobly done ? Ay, and wisely too ;  
 For 't would have anger'd any heart alive  
 To hear the men deny 't. So that, I say,  
 He has borne all things well : and I do think  
 That had he Duncan's sons under his key —  
 As, an 't please heaven, he shall not — they should  
 find

What 't were to kill a father ; so should Fleance. 20  
 But, peace ! for from broad words and 'cause he fail'd  
 His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear  
 Macduff lives in disgrace : sir, can you tell  
 Where he bestows himself ?

*Lord.*

The son of Duncan,  
 From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,  
 Lives in the English court, and is received  
 Of the most pious Edward with such grace  
 That the malevolence of fortune nothing  
 Takes from his high respect : thither Macduff  
 Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his aid 30  
 To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward :  
 That, by the help of these — with Him above  
 To ratify the work — we may again  
 Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,  
 Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,  
 Do faithful homage and receive free honours :  
 All which we pine for now : and this report

27. the most pious Edward = Edward the Confessor, the predecessor of Harold.

35. Free from our feasts, etc. Had Shakespeare been in less haste, he probably would have remodelled this line thus: "From bloody knives our feasts and banquets free."

Hath so exasperate the King that he  
Prepares for some attempt of war.

*Len.* Sent he to Macduff?

*Lord.* He did : and with an absolute "Sir, not I,"  
The cloudy messenger turns me his back, 41  
And hums, as who should say, "You'll rue the time  
That clogs me with this answer."

*Len.* And that well might  
Advise him to a caution, to hold what distance  
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel  
Fly to the court of England and unfold  
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing  
May soon return to this our suffering country  
Under a hand accursed!

*Lord.* I'll send my prayers with him. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A cavern. In the middle, a boiling cauldron.*

*Thunder. Enter the three Witches.*

*First Witch.* Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

*Sec. Witch.* Thrice, and once the hedge-pig whined.

*Third Witch.* Harpier cries, 'T is time, 't is time.

*First Witch.* Round about the cauldron go ;  
In the poison'd entrails throw.  
Toad, that under cold stone

1. **brinded** : The same as "brindled."

3. **Harpier**. If this word is not a corruption, or a misprint of harpy, we know not what it means.

6. **Toad**, etc. [Collier remarks, "Laying only due and expressive emphasis upon 'cold,' it may be doubted whether the line be defective." And Hudson : "To our ear the extending of 'cold' to the time of two syllables *feels* right enough." So also the Clarendon Press editors.]

Days and nights has thirty-one  
 Swelter'd venom sleeping got,  
 Boil thou first i' th' charmed pot.

*All.* Double, double toil and trouble ;  
 Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

10

*Sec. Witch.* Fillet of a fenny snake,  
 In the cauldron boil and bake ;  
 Eye of newt and toe of frog,  
 Wool of bat and tongue of dog,  
 Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,  
 Lizard's leg and owlet's wing,  
 For a charm of powerful trouble,  
 Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

*All.* Double, double toil and trouble ;  
 Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

20

*Third Witch.* Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,  
 Witches' mummy, maw and gulf  
 Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,  
 Root of hemlock digg'd i' th' dark,  
 Liver of blaspheming Jew,  
 Gall of goat, and slips of yew  
 Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse,  
 Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,  
 Finger of birth-strangled babe  
 Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,  
 Make the gruel thick and slab :  
 Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,  
 For the ingredients of our cauldron.

30

8. [Swelter'd = sweated.]

23. [Gulf = that which sucks in, as a whirlpool does (engulfs).  
 Hence it has been defined as "gullet."

24. ravin'd = ravening, ravenous.

33. chaudron = omentum or rim, part of the entrails.  
 Cauldron was a perfect rhyme, the *l* being then silent.

*All.* Double, double toil and trouble ;  
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

*Sec. Witch.* Cool it with a baboon's blood,  
Then the charm is firm and good.

*Enter HECATE to the other three Witches.*

*Hec.* O, well done ! I commend your pains ;  
And every one shall share i' th' gains : 40  
And now about the cauldron sing,  
Like elves and fairies in a ring,  
Enchanting all that you put in.

*[Music and a song : "Black spirits," etc. Hecate retires.]*

*Sec. Witch.* By the pricking of my thumbs,  
Something wicked this way comes.

Open, locks,  
Whoever knocks !

*Enter MACBETH.*

*Macb.* How now, you secret, black, and midnight  
hags !

What is 't you do ?

*All.* A deed without a name.

*Macb.* I conjure you, by that which you profess, 50  
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me :  
Though you untie the winds and let them fight  
Against the churches ; though the yesty waves  
Confound and swallow navigation up ;  
Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown down ;  
Though castles topple on their warders' heads ;  
Though palaces and pyramids do slope  
Their heads to their foundations ; though the treas-  
ure

*Music and a song, Black spirits, etc. : This song also is found in Middleton's Witch.*

55. Though bladed corn be lodged = though corn in the blade be laid flat.

Of nature's germens tumble all together,  
 Even till destruction sicken ; answer me  
 To what I ask you.

*First Witch.* Speak.

*Sec. Witch.* Demand.

*Third Witch.* We'll answer.

*First Witch.* Say, if thou 'dst rather hear it from  
 our mouths,

Or from our masters' ?

*Macb.* Call 'em ; let me see 'em.

*First Witch.* Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten  
 Her nine farrow ; grease that 's sweaten  
 From the murderer's gibbet throw  
 Into the flame.

*All.* Come, high or low ;  
 Thyself and office deftly show !

*Thunder.* *First Apparition : an armed Head.*

*Macb.* Tell me, thou unknown power, —

*First Witch.* He knows thy thought :  
 Hear his speech, but say thou nought. 70

*First App.* Macbeth ! Macbeth ! Macbeth ! be-  
 ware Macduff ;  
 Beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.

*[Descends.]*

*Macb.* Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution,  
 thanks ;  
 Thou hast harp'd my fear aright : but one word  
 more, —

*First Witch.* He will not be commanded : here 's  
 another,  
 More potent than the first.

59. *germens* = growing seeds ; here, the germs and roots of  
 all things.

*Thunder. Second Apparition : a bloody Child.*

*Sec. App.* Macbeth ! Macbeth ! Macbeth !

*Macb.* Had I three ears, I'd hear thee.

*Sec. App.* Be bloody, bold, and resolute ; laugh to scorn

The power of man ; for none of woman born 80  
Shall harm Macbeth. [Descends.

*Macb.* Then live, Macduff : what need I fear of thee ?

But yet I'll make assurance double sure,  
And take a bond of fate : thou shalt not live ;  
That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,  
And sleep in spite of thunder.

*Thunder. Third Apparition : a Child crowned, with a tree in his hand.*

What is this

That rises like the issue of a king,  
And wears upon his baby-brow the round  
And top of sovereignty ?

*All.* Listen, but speak not to 't.

*Third App.* Be lion-mettled, proud ; and take no  
care 90

Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are :  
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until  
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill  
Shall come against him. [Descends.

*Macb.* That will never be :

Who can impress the forest, bid the tree  
Unfix his earth-bound root ? Sweet bodements !  
good !

Rebellion's head, rise never till the wood  
Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth  
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath  
To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart



Throbs to know one thing: tell me, if your art  
Can tell so much: shall Banquo's issue ever  
Reign in this kingdom?

*All.* Seek to know no more.

*Macb.* I will be satisfied: deny me this,  
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know.  
Why sinks that cauldron? and what noise is this?

[*Hautboys.*

*First Witch.* Show!

*Sec. Witch.* Show!

*Third Witch.* Show!

*All.* Show his eyes, and grieve his heart; 110  
Come like shadows, so depart!

*A show of Eight Kings, the last with a glass in his hand; Banquo's  
Ghost following.*

*Macb.* Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo;  
down!

Thy crown does sear mine eye-balls. And thy hair,  
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first.  
A third is like the former. Filthy hags!  
Why do you show me this? A fourth! Start, eyes!  
What, will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?  
Another yet! A seventh! I'll see no more:  
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass 120  
Which shows me many more; and some I see  
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry:  
Horrible sight! Now, I see, 't is true;

**A show of Eight Kings.** Eight Stuart Kings, said to have been descended from Banquo, preceded James I., upon the throne of Scotland. His beheaded mother, Mary, was prudently left out of the show.

**121. two-fold balls and treble sceptres:** indicating the coming union of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, which took place under James I., although the united kingdom was not formed until afterwards.



For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me,  
And points at them for his. [*Apparitions vanish.*]

What, is this so?

*First Witch.* Ay, sir, all this is so: but why  
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?

Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,

And show the best of our delights:

I'll charm the air to give a sound,

While you perform your antic round:

130

That this great king may kindly say,

Our duties did his welcome pay.

[*Music. The Witches dance, and then vanish, with Hecate.*]

*Macb.* Where are they? Gone? Let this per-  
nicious hour

Stand aye accursed in the calendar!

Come in, without there!

*Enter LENNOX.*

*Len.* What's your grace's will?

*Macb.* Saw you the weird sisters?

*Len.* No, my lord.

*Macb.* Came they not by you?

*Len.* No, indeed, my lord.

*Macb.* Infected be the air whereon they ride;

And damn'd all those that trust them! I did hear

The galloping of horse: who was't came by? 140

*Len.* 'T is two or three, my lord, that bring you  
word

Macduff is fled to England.

*Macb.* Fled to England!

*Len.* Ay, my good lord.

*Macb.* Time, thou anticipat'st my dread exploits:  
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook

123. blood-bolter'd. "Boltered" is a Warwickshire word  
meaning clotted, coagulated.

Unless the deed go with it : from this moment  
 The very firstlings of my heart shall be  
 The firstlings of my hand. And even now,  
 To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and  
 done :

The castle of Macduff I will surprise ; 150  
 Seize upon Fife ; give to the edge o' th' sword  
 His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls  
 That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool ;  
 This deed I 'll do before this purpose cool.  
 But no more sights ! — Where are these gentlemen ?  
 Come, bring me where they are. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. *Fife.* MACDUFF'S castle.

*Enter* LADY MACDUFF, her Son, and Ross.

*L. Macd.* What had he done, to make him fly the  
 land ?

*Ross.* You must have patience, madam.

*L. Macd.* He had none :

His flight was madness : when our actions do not,  
 Our fears do make us traitors.

*Ross.* You know not

Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.

*L. Macd.* Wisdom ! to leave his wife, to leave his  
 babes,

His mansion and his titles in a place  
 From whence himself does fly ? He loves us not ;  
 He wants the natural touch : for the poor wren,  
 The most diminutive of birds, will fight, 10  
 Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.  
 All is the fear and nothing is the love ;  
 As little is the wisdom, where the flight  
 So runs against all reason.

*Ross.* My dearest coz,  
I pray you, school yourself: but for your husband,  
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows  
The fits o' th' season. I dare not speak much further ;  
But cruel are the times, when we are traitors  
And do not know ourselves ; when we hold rumour  
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear, 20  
But float upon a wild and violent sea  
And each way move. I take my leave of you :  
Shall not be long but I 'll be here again :  
Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward  
To what they were before. My pretty cousin,  
Blessing upon you !

*L. Macd.* Father'd he is, and yet he 's fatherless.

*Ross.* I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,  
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort :  
I take my leave at once. [Exit.

*L. Macd.* Sirrah, your father 's dead : 30  
And what will you do now ? How will you live ?

*Son.* As birds do, mother.

*L. Macd.* What, with worms and flies ?

*Son.* With what I get, I mean ; and so do they.

*L. Macd.* Poor bird ! thou 'dst never fear the net  
nor lime,  
The pitfall nor the gin.

*Son.* Why should I, mother ? Poor birds they are  
not set for.

My father is not dead, for all your saying.

*L. Macd.* Yes, he is dead : how wilt thou do for a  
father ?

*Son.* Nay, how will you do for a husband ?

17. the fits o' th' season = what suits the time.

19. [hold rumour: probably equivalent to "believe rumour."]

*L. Macd.* Why, I can buy me twenty at any market. 40

*Son.* Then you 'll buy 'em to sell again.

*L. Macd.* Thou speak'st with all thy wit ; and yet,  
i' faith,

With wit enough for thee.

*Son.* Was my father a traitor, mother ?

*L. Macd.* Ay, that he was.

*Son.* What is a traitor ?

*L. Macd.* Why, one that swears and lies.

*Son.* And be all traitors that do so ?

*L. Macd.* Every one that does so is a traitor, and  
must be hang'd. 50

*Son.* And must they all be hang'd that swear and  
lie ?

*L. Macd.* Every one.

*Son.* Who must hang them ?

*L. Macd.* Why, the honest men.

*Son.* Then the liars and swearers are fools ; for  
there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest  
men and hang up them.

*L. Macd.* Now, God help thee, poor monkey !  
But how wilt thou do for a father ? 59

*Son.* If he were dead, you 'd weep for him : if you  
would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly  
have a new father.

*L. Macd.* Poor prattler, how thou talk'st !

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mess.* Bless you, fair dame ! I am not to you  
known,

Though in your state of honour I am perfect.

I doubt some danger does approach you nearly :

65. **your state of honour** = your position as a person of  
honour, of rank.

If you will take a homely man's advice,  
Be not found here ; hence, with your little ones.  
To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage ;  
To do worse to you were fell cruelty, 70  
Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve  
you !

I dare abide no longer. [Exit.

*L. Macd.* Whither should I fly ?  
I have done no harm. But I remember now  
I am in this earthly world ; where to do harm  
Is often laudable, to do good sometime  
Accounted dangerous folly : why then, alas,  
Do I put up that womanly defence,  
To say I have done no harm ?

*Enter Murderers.*

What are these faces ?

*First Mur.* Where is your husband ?

*L. Macd.* I hope, in no place so unsanctified 80  
Where such as thou mayst find him.

*First Mur.* He's a traitor.

*Son.* Thou liest, thou shag-hair'd villain !

*First Mur.* What, you egg !  
[Stabbing him.

Young fry of treachery !

*Son.* He has kill'd me, mother :

Run away, I pray you ! [Dies.

*[Exit Lady Macduff, crying " Murder ! " Exeunt Murderers, following her.*

SCENE III. *England. Before the KING's palace.*

*Enter MALCOLM and MACDUFF.*

*Mal.* Let us seek out some desolate shade, and  
there

Weep our sad bosoms empty.

*Macd.* Let us rather  
 Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men  
 Bestride our down-fall'n birthdom : each new morn  
 New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows  
 Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds  
 As if it felt with Scotland and yell'd out  
 Like syllable of dolour.

*Mal.* What I believe I 'll wail,  
 What know believe, and what I can redress,  
 As I shall find the time to friend, I will. 10  
 What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.  
 This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,  
 Was once thought honest : you have loved him well.  
 He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young ; but  
 something  
 You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom  
 To offer up a weak poor innocent lamb  
 To appease an angry god.

*Macd.* I am not treacherous.

*Mal.* But Macbeth is.  
 A good and virtuous nature may recoil  
 In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your par-  
 don ; 20  
 That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose :  
 Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell :  
 Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,  
 Yet grace must still look so.

*Macd.* I have lost my hopes.

4. **birthdom** = country and government in which we have a birthright.

15. **and wisdom**, etc.: carelessly written for "and you may have wisdom enough."

19. **recoil** = yield, succumb.

20. [In an imperial charge : "in the execution of a royal commission." Dr. Johnson.]

*Mal.* Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.

Why in that rawness left you wife and child,  
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,  
Without leave-taking? I pray you,  
Let not my jealousies be your dishonours,  
But mine own safeties. You may be rightly just, 30  
Whatever I shall think.

*Macd.* Bleed, bleed, poor country!  
Great tyranny! lay thou thy basis sure,  
For goodness dare not check thee: wear thou thy  
wrongs;

The title is affeer'd! Fare thee well, lord:  
I would not be the villain that thou think'st  
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,  
And the rich East to boot.

*Mal.* Be not offended:  
I speak not as in absolute fear of you.  
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;  
It weeps, it bleeds; and each new day a gash 40  
Is added to her wounds: I think withal  
There would be hands uplifted in my right;  
And here from gracious England have I offer  
Of goodly thousands: but, for all this,  
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,  
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country  
Shall have more vices than it had before,  
More suffer and more sundry ways than ever,  
By him that shall succeed.

*Macd.* What should he be?

*Mal.* It is myself I mean: in whom I know 50  
All the particulars of vice so grafted  
That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth

34. *affeer'd* = confirmed, made sure.



Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state  
Esteem him as a lamb, being compared  
With my confineless harms.

*Macd.* Not in the legions  
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd  
In evils to top Macbeth.

*Mal.* I grant him bloody,  
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,  
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin  
That has a name : but there 's no bottom, none, 60  
In my voluptuousness : your wives, your daughters,  
Your matrons and your maids, could not fill up  
The cistern of my lust, and my desire  
All continent impediments would o'erbear  
That did oppose my will : better Macbeth  
Than such an one to reign.

*Macd.* Boundless intemperance  
In nature is a tyranny ; it hath been  
The untimely emptying of the happy throne  
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet  
To take upon you what is yours : you may 70  
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,  
And yet seem cold, the time you may so hoodwink.  
We have willing dames enough : there cannot be  
That vulture in you, to devour so many  
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,  
Finding it so inclined.

58. **Luxurious** = intemperately amorous : always used thus by Shakespeare.

71. **Convey your pleasures**, etc. Forced as the sense is, we must accept this as meaning, enjoy secretly your pleasures. Shakespeare heedlessly used the word that he here caught from Holinshed, who makes Macduff reply, "And I shall **convey** the matter so wisely that thou shalt be so satisfied at thy **pleasure** in such secret wise," etc.



*Mal.*

With this there grows  
In my most ill-compos'd affection such  
A stanchless avarice that, were I king,  
I should cut off the nobles for their lands,  
Desire his jewels and this other's house :  
And my more-having would be as a sauce  
To make me hunger more ; that I should forge  
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,  
Destroying them for wealth.

80

*Macd.*

This avarice  
Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root  
Than summer-seeming lust, and it hath been  
The sword of our slain kings : yet do not fear ;  
Scotland hath foisons to fill up your will,  
Of your mere own : all these are portable,  
With other graces weigh'd.

90

*Mal.* But I have none : the king-becoming graces,  
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,  
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,  
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,  
I have no relish of them, but abound  
In the division of each several crime,  
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should  
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,  
Uproar the universal peace, confound  
All unity on earth.

*Macd.*

O Scotland, Scotland !

100

*Mal.* If such an one be fit to govern, speak :  
I am as I have spoken.

77. [affection = disposition.]

86. summer-seeming = passing like summer, hot and short.

88. foisons = plenty ; rare in the plural.

89. portable = bearable.

93. perseverance : accented on the second syllable.

*Macd.*

Fit to govern !

No, not to live. O nation miserable,  
 With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,  
 When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,  
 Since that the truest issue of thy throne  
 By his own interdiction stands accurs'd,  
 And does blaspheme his breed ? Thy royal father  
 Was a most sainted king : the queen that bore thee,  
 Oftener upon her knees than on her feet, 110  
 Died every day she lived. — Fare thee well !  
 These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself  
 Have banish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,  
 Thy hope ends here !

*Mal.*

Macduff, this noble passion,

Child of integrity, hath from my soul  
 Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts  
 To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth  
 By many of these trains hath sought to win me  
 Into his power, and modest wisdom plucks me  
 From over-credulous haste : but God above 120  
 Deal between thee and me ! for even now  
 I put myself to thy direction, and  
 Unspeak mine own detraction ; here abjure  
 The taints and blames I laid upon myself,  
 For strangers to my nature. I am yet  
 Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,  
 Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,  
 At no time broke my faith, would not betray  
 The Devil to his fellow, and delight  
 No less in truth than life : my first false speaking 130  
 Was this upon myself : what I am truly,  
 Is thine and my poor country's to command :  
 Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,

Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men,  
Already at a point, was setting forth.

Now we 'll together ; and the chance of goodness  
Be like our warranted quarrel ! Why are you silent ?

*Macd.* Such welcome and unwelcome things at  
once

'T is hard to reconcile.

*Enter a Doctor.*

*Mal.* Well ; more anon. — Comes the King forth,  
I pray you ? 140

*Doct.* Ay, sir ; there are a crew of wretched souls  
That stay his cure : their malady convinces  
The great assay of art ; but at his touch —  
Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand —  
They presently amend.

*Mal.* I thank you, doctor. [*Exit Doctor.*]

*Macd.* What 's the disease he means ?

*Mal.* 'T is call'd the evil :

A most miraculous work in this good king ;  
Which often, since my here-remain in England,  
I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,  
Himself best knows : but strangely-visited people, 150  
All swoll'n and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,  
The mere despair of surgery, he cures,  
Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,  
Put on with holy prayers : and 't is spoken,  
To the succeeding royalty he leaves  
The healing benediction. With this strange virtue,  
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,  
And sundry blessings hang about his throne,  
That speak him full of grace.

135. at a point = ready ; as in the phrase "on the point of doing it."

142. convinces = overcomes, as in Act I. Sc. 7, line 64.

152. [mere = utter.]

*Enter Ross.*

*Macd.* See, who comes here ?

*Mal.* My countryman ; but yet I know him not. 160

*Macd.* My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

*Mal.* I know him now. Good God, betimes remove

The means that makes us strangers !

*Ross.* Sir, amen.

*Macd.* Stands Scotland where it did ?

*Ross.* Alas, poor country !

Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot

Be call'd our mother, but our grave ; where nothing,

But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile ;

Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air

Are made, not mark'd ; where violent sorrow seems

A modern ecstasy : the dead man's knell 170

Is there scarce ask'd for who : and good men's lives

Expire before the flowers in their caps,

Dying or ere they sicken.

*Macd.* O, relation

Too nice, and yet too true !

*Mal.* What 's the newest grief ?

*Ross.* That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker :  
Each minute teems a new one.

*Macd.* How does my wife ?

*Ross.* Why, well.

*Macd.* And all my children ?

*Ross.* Well too.

*Macd.* The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace ?

170. [modern = trite, common. On ecstasy see note, Act III. Sc. 2, line 22.]

174. Too nice = too particular.

177. children: pronounced *childeren*, of which it is a contraction. It is a double plural.

*Ross.* No ; they were well at peace when I did leave 'em.

*Macd.* Be not a niggard of your speech : how goes 't ? 180

*Ross.* When I came hither to transport the tidings,  
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour  
Of many worthy fellows that were out ;  
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,  
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot :  
Now is the time of help ; your eye in Scotland  
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,  
To doff their dire distresses.

*Mal.* Be't their comfort  
We're coming thither : gracious England hath  
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men ; 190  
An older and a better soldier none  
That Christendom gives out.

*Ross.* Would I could answer  
This comfort with the like ! But I have words  
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,  
Where hearing should not latch them.

*Macd.* What concern they?  
The general cause ? or is it a fee-grief  
Due to some single breast ?

*Ross.* No mind that's honest  
But in it shares some woe ; though the main part  
Pertains to you alone.

*Macd.* If it be mine,  
Keep it not from me, quickly let me have it. 200

*Ross.* Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,

183. that were out = in the field.

195. latch = catch, apprehend.

196. fee-grief = a grief held in fee ; the absolute property of some one.

Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound  
That ever yet they heard.

*Macd.* Hum ! I guess at it.

*Ross.* Your castle is surprised ; your wife and  
babes

Savagely slaughter'd : to relate the manner,  
Were, on the quarry of these murder'd deer,  
To add the death of you.

*Mal.* Merciful heaven !

What, man ! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows ;  
Give sorrow words : the grief that does not speak  
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break. 210

*Macd.* My children too ?

*Ross.* Wife, children, servants, all  
That could be found.

*Macd.* And I must be from thence !  
My wife kill'd too ?

*Ross.* I have said.

*Mal.* Be comforted :  
Let 's make us medicines of our great revenge,  
To cure this deadly grief.

*Macd.* He has no children. All my pretty ones ?  
Did you say all ? O hell-kite ! All ?  
What, all my pretty chickens and their dam  
At one fell swoop ?

*Mal.* Dispute it like a man.

*Macd.* I shall do so ; 220  
But I must also feel it as a man :  
I cannot but remember such things were,  
That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on,  
And would not take their part ? Sinful Macduff,  
They were all struck for thee ! naught that I am,

206. *quarry* = slaughtered heap.

220. *dispute* = contend with, bear up against.

Not for their own demerits, but for mine,  
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now!

*Mal.* Be this the whetstone of your sword: let grief  
Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it. 229

*Macd.* O, I could play the woman with mine eyes  
And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,  
Cut short all intermission; front to front  
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;  
Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,  
Heaven forgive him too!

*Mal.* This tune goes manly.  
Come, go we to the King; our power is ready;  
Our lack is nothing but our leave: Macbeth  
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above  
Put on their instruments. Receive what cheer you  
may: 239  
The night is long that never finds the day. [Exeunt.]

## ACT V.

SCENE I. *Dunsinane. Anteroom in the castle.*

*Enter a Doctor of Physic and a Waiting Gentlewoman.*

*Doct.* I have two nights watch'd with you, but can  
perceive no truth in your report. When was it she  
last walk'd?

*Gent.* Since his majesty went into the field, I have  
seen her rise from her bed, throw her nightgown upon

238, 239. [the powers above Put on their instruments.  
A passage of importance in the moral scheme of the play. Steevens explains it: "thrust forward us, their instruments, against the tyrant." He adds an illuminating quotation from Chapman's *Iliad*: "For Jove makes Trojans instruments, and virtually then Wiields arms himself."]

5. *night-gown* = dressing gown, bedchamber gown.



her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon 't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed ; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

*Doct.* A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching! In this slumb'ry agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say? 13

*Gent.* That, sir, which I will not report after her.

*Doct.* You may to me: and 't is most meet you should.

*Gent.* Neither to you nor any one ; having no witness to confirm my speech.

*Enter LADY MACBETH, with a taper.*

Lo you, here she comes ! This is her very guise ; and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her ; stand close.

*Doct.* How came she by that light ?

*Gent.* Why, it stood by her ; she has light by her continually ; 't is her command. 23

*Doct.* You see, her eyes are open.

*Gent.* Ay, but their sense are shut.

*Doct.* What is it she does now ? Look, how she rubs her hands.

*Gent.* It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands : I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour. 30

*Lady M.* Yet here 's a spot.

*Doct.* Hark ! she speaks : I will set down what

19. [her very guise : her accustomed manner.]

25. their sense are shut. Shakespeare should have written "is shut;" but there is no evidence that he did; and I feel sure that he did not. [Walker notes that plurals of nouns ending in *s*, *ss*, *se*, and *ce* are found without the usual addition of *s* or *es*. Compare *Merchant of Venice*, Act IV. Sc. 1: "Are there balance here?" ]



comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

*Lady M.* Out, damned spot! out, I say! — One : two : why, then 't is time to do 't. — Hell is murky! — Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account? — Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him. 40

*Doct.* Do you mark that?

*Lady M.* The thane of Fife had a wife : where is she now? — What, will these hands ne'er be clean? — No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that : you mar all with this starting.

*Doct.* Go to, go to ; you have known what you should not.

*Gent.* She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that : heaven knows what she has known. 49

*Lady M.* Here 's the smell of the blood still : all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

*Doct.* What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.

*Gent.* I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.

*Doct.* Well, well, well, —

*Gent.* Pray God it be, sir. 61

*Doct.* This disease is beyond my practice : yet I have known those which have walk'd in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

*Lady M.* Wash your hands, put on your night-gown ; look not so pale. — I tell you yet again, Banquo 's buried ; he cannot come out on 's grave.

*Doct.* Even so?

*Lady M.* To bed, to bed! there 's knocking at the

gate : come, come, come, come, give me your hand.  
 What's done cannot be undone. — To bed, to bed, to  
 bed ! [Exit.

*Doct.* Will she go now to bed ? 70

*Gent.* Directly.

*Doct.* Foul whisp'rings are abroad : unnatural deeds .  
 Do breed unnatural troubles : infected minds  
 To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets :  
 More needs she the divine than the physician.  
 God, God forgive us all ! Look after her ;  
 Remove from her the means of all annoyance,  
 And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night :  
 My mind she has mated, and amazed my sight. 79  
 I think, but dare not speak.

*Gent.* Good night, good doctor. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The country near Dunsinane.*

*Drum and colours. Enter MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX,  
 and Soldiers.*

*Ment.* The English power is near, led on by Mal-  
 colm,  
 His uncle Siward and the good Macduff :  
 Revenges burn in them ; for their dear causes  
 Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm  
 Excite the mortified man.

*Ang.* Near Birnam wood  
 Shall we well meet them ; that way are they coming.

*Caith.* Who knows if Donalbain be with his  
 brother ?

77. *annoyance* = self-injury.

79. *mated* = dazed, dumfounded.

5. *the mortified man* = the ascetic, the man who has morti-  
 fied his flesh. [It is also explained as "the dead man;" and  
*bleeding* is referred to the superstition that the wounds of a  
 murdered man bled in the presence of his murderer.]

*Len.* For certain, sir, he is not : I have a file  
Of all the gentry : there is Siward's son,  
And many unrough youths that even now  
Protest their first of manhood. 10

*Ment.* What does the tyrant ?

*Caith.* Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies :  
Some say he 's mad ; others that lesser hate him  
Do call it valiant fury : but, for certain,  
He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause  
Within the belt of rule.

*Ang.* Now does he feel  
His secret murders sticking on his hands ;  
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach ;  
Those he commands move only in command,  
Nothing in love : now does he feel his title 20  
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe  
Upon a dwarfish thief.

*Ment.* Who then shall blame  
His pester'd senses to recoil and start,  
When all that is within him does condemn  
Itself for being there ?

*Caith.* Well, march we on,  
To give obedience where 't is truly owed :  
Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal,  
And with him pour we in our country's purge  
Each drop of us.

*Len.* Or so much as it needs,  
To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds. 30  
Make we our march towards Birnam. [*Exeunt, marching.*]

10. *unrough* = unbearded.

27. *medicine* = healing remedy ; not the French *médecin* = leech, physician. Shakespeare never uses the word in that sense.

SCENE III. *Dunsinane. A room in the castle.**Enter MACBETH, Doctor, and Attendants.*

*Macb.* Bring me no more reports ; let them fly all :  
 Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,  
 I cannot taint with fear. What 's the boy Malcolm ?  
 Was he not born of woman ? The spirits that know  
 All mortal consequences have pronounced me thus :  
 " Fear not, Macbeth ; no man that 's born of woman  
 Shall e'er have power upon thee." Then fly, false  
     thanes,  
 And mingle with the English epicures :  
 The mind I sway by and the heart I bear  
 Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear. 10

*Enter a Servant.*

The Devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon !  
 Where got'st thou that goose look ?

*Serv.* There is ten thousand —*Macb.* Geese, villain ?*Serv.* Soldiers, sir.

*Macb.* Go prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,  
 Thou lily-liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch ?  
 Death of thy soul ! those linen cheeks of thine  
 Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face ?

*Serv.* The English force, so please you.*Macb.* Take thy face hence. *[Exit Servant.]*

Seyton ! — I am sick at heart,  
 When I behold — Seyton, I say ! — This push 20  
 Will chair me ever, or disseat me now.

15. **patch** = fool. Jesters wore patched or party-colored clothes.

21. **Will chair me**: the folio "cheer me." [The first folio reads "dis-eate;" the other folios "disease," which Dr. Furness plausibly makes "dis-ease." This reading would manifestly

I have lived long enough: my way of life  
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;  
And that which should accompany old age,  
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,  
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,  
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honour, breath,  
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.  
Seyton!

*Enter SEYTON.*

*Sey.* What is your gracious pleasure?

*Macb.* What news more? 30

*Sey.* All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported.

*Macb.* I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be  
hack'd.

Give me my armour.

*Sey.* 'T is not needed yet.

*Macb.* I'll put it on.

Send out more horses; skirr the country round;  
Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armour.  
How does your patient, doctor?

*Doct.* Not so sick, my lord,  
As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,  
That keep her from her rest.

*Macb.* Cure her of that.

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased, 40  
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,  
Raze out the written troubles of the brain  
And with some sweet oblivious antidote  
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff  
Which weighs upon the heart?

accompany "cheer." "Cheer . . . dis-ease" may perhaps be preferred, as having relation to one of the essential metaphors of the play. See Suggestions for Special Study.]

22. **my way of life.** Dr. Johnson proposed "my May of life," very speciously.



*Ment.* We doubt it nothing.

*Siw.* What wood is this before us?

*Ment.* The wood of Birnam.

*Mal.* Let every soldier hew him down a bough  
And bear 't before him : thereby shall we shadow  
The numbers of our host and make discovery  
Err in report of us.

*Soldiers.* It shall be done.

*Siw.* We learn no other but the confident tyrant  
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure  
Our setting down before 't.

*Mal.* 'T is his main hope : 10  
For where there is advantage to be gain'd,  
Both more and less have given him the revolt,  
And none serve with him but constrained things  
Whose hearts are absent too.

*Macd.* Let our just censures  
Attend the true event, and put we on  
Industrious soldiership.

*Siw.* The time approaches  
That will with due decision make us know  
What we shall say we have and what we owe.  
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,  
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate : 20  
Towards which advance the war. [*Exeunt, marching.*]

SCENE V. *Dunsinane. Within the castle.*

*Enter MACBETH, SEYTON, and Soldiers, with drum and colours.*

*Macb.* Hang out our banners on the outward  
walls ;

The cry is still " They come : " our castle's strength  
Will laugh a siege to scorn : here let them lie  
Till famine and the ague eat them up :

12. **more and less** = great and small, everybody.



Were they not forced with those that should be ours,  
 We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,  
 And beat them backward home. *[A cry of women within.]*

What is that noise?

*Sey.* It is the cry of women, my good lord. *[Exit.]*

*Macb.* I have almost forgot the taste of fears :  
 The time has been, my senses would have cool'd 10  
 To hear a night-shriek ; and my fell of hair  
 Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir  
 As life were in 't : I have supp'd full with horrors ;  
 Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,  
 Cannot once start me.

*Re-enter SEYTON.*

Wherefore was that cry?

*Sey.* The Queen, my lord, is dead.

*Macb.* She should have died hereafter ;  
 There would have been a time for such a word.  
 To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,  
 Creeps in this petty pace from day to day 20  
 To the last syllable of recorded time,  
 And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
 The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle !  
 Life 's but a walking shadow, a poor player  
 That struts and frets his hour upon the stage

5. **forced**=given strength, reinforced.

17. [**She should have died hereafter** = it was ordained that she should die, hereafter, if not now ; it had to be, at some time. It is usual to deliver this passage with emotion, as if it meant "she ought not to have died now." Nothing could be farther from the apathetic spirit of the entire scene. If we insist upon making **should have** equivalent to "ought to have," the sentence must be taken merely as the reflection, "She dies before her time ;" not as the cry of need, "I cannot spare her now !" Sir Henry Irving is so anxious to convey the proper impression here, that he says "would have died."]



And then is heard no more : it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.

*Enter a Messenger.*

Thou com'st to use thy tongue ; thy story quickly.

*Mess.* Gracious my lord,  
I should report that which I say I saw,  
But know not how to do it.

*Macb.* Well, say, sir.

*Mess.* As I did stand my watch upon the hill,  
I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,  
The wood began to move.

*Macb.* Liar and slave !

*Mess.* Let me endure your wrath, if 't be not so :  
Within this three mile may you see it coming ;  
I say, a moving grove.

*Macb.* If thou speak'st false,  
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,  
Till famine cling thee : if thy speech be sooth,  
I care not if thou dost for me as much.  
I pull in resolution, and begin  
To doubt the equivocation of the fiend  
That lies like truth : " Fear not, till Birnam wood  
Do come to Dunsinane : " and now a wood  
Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out !  
If this which he avouches does appear,  
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.  
I gin to be aweary of the sun,  
And wish the estate o' th' world were now undone.  
Ring the alarum-bell ! Blow, wind ! come, wrack !  
At least we 'll die with harness on our back. [*Exeunt.*]

40. cling = shrivel.

42. pull in = check, as a horse is checked.

SCENE VI. *Dunsinane. Before the castle.*

*Drum and colours. Enter MALCOLM, old SIWARD, MACDUFF, and their Army, with boughs.*

*Mal.* Now near enough : your leafy screens throw down,

And show like those you are. You, worthy uncle,  
Shall, with my cousin, your right-noble son,  
Lead our first battle : worthy Macduff and we  
Shall take upon 's what else remains to do,  
According to our order.

*Siw.* Fare you well.

Do we but find the tyrant's power to-night,  
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

*Macd.* Make all our trumpets speak ; give them all  
breath,

Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death. 10

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII. *Another part of the field.*

*Alarums. Enter MACBETH.*

*Macb.* They have tied me to a stake ; I cannot fly,  
But, bear-like, I must fight the course. What 's he  
That was not born of woman ? Such a one  
Am I to fear, or none.

*Enter young SIWARD.*

*Yo. Siw.* What is thy name ?

*Macb.* Thou 'lt be afraid to hear it.

*Yo. Siw.* No ; though thou call'st thyself a hotter  
name

Than any is in hell.

*Macb.* My name 's Macbeth.

4. [battle : here a body of troops, a division of an army. So Holinshed : " He divided the same into three battels."]

*Yo. Siw.* The Devil himself could not pronounce  
a title  
More hateful to mine ear.

*Macb.* No, nor more fearful.

*Yo. Siw.* Thou liest, abhorred tyrant ; with my  
sword 10

I'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

*[They fight and young Siward is slain.]*

*Macb.* Thou wast born of woman.

But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,  
Brandish'd by man that 's of a woman born. [Exit.

*Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.*

*Macd.* That way the noise is. Tyrant, show thy  
face !

If thou be'st slain and with no stroke of mine,  
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.  
I cannot strike at wretched kerns, whose arms  
Are hired to bear their staves : either thou, Macbeth,  
Or else my sword with an unbatter'd edge 19  
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou should'st be ;  
By this great clatter, one of greatest note  
Seems bruited. Let me find him, fortune !  
And more I beg not. [Exit. Alarums.

*Enter MALCOLM and old SIWARD.*

*Siw.* This way, my lord ; the castle 's gently ren-  
der'd :

The tyrant's people on both sides do fight ;  
The noble thanes do bravely in the war ;  
The day almost itself professes yours,  
And little is to do.

*Mal.* We have met with foes  
That strike beside us.

*Siw.* Enter, sir, the castle. [Exeunt. Alarums.

18. staves = spear-staves.

SCENE VIII. *Another part of the field.**Enter MACBETH.*

*Macb.* Why should I play the Roman fool, and die  
On mine own sword? whiles I see lives, the gashes  
Do better upon them.

*Enter MACDUFF*

*Macd.* Turn, hell-hound, turn!

*Macb.* Of all men else I have avoided thee:  
But get thee back; my soul is too much charged  
With blood of thine already.

*Macd.* I have no words:  
My voice is in my sword: thou bloodier villain  
Than terms can give thee out! *[They fight.]*

*Macb.* Thou lovest labour:  
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant air  
With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed: 10  
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;  
I bear a charmed life, which must not yield  
To one of woman born.

*Macd.* Despair thy charm;  
And let the angel whom thou still hast serv'd  
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb  
Untimely ripp'd.

*Macb.* Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,  
For it hath cow'd my better part of man!  
And be these juggling fiends no more believed,  
That palter with us in a double sense; 20  
That keep the word of promise to our ear,  
And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.

*Macd.* Then yield thee, coward,  
And live to be the show and gaze o' th' time:  
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,

Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,  
“Here may you see the tyrant.”

*Macb.* I will not yield,  
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm’s feet,  
And to be baited with the rabble’s curse.  
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane, 30  
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,  
Yet I will try the last. Before my body  
I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff,  
And damn’d be him that first cries “Hold, enough!”  
[*Exeunt, fighting. Alarums.*]

*Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and colours, MALCOLM, old  
SIWARD, ROSS, the other Thanes and Soldiers.*

*Mal.* I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.

*Siw.* Some must go off: and yet, by these I see,  
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

*Mal.* Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

*Ross.* Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier’s debt:  
He only lived but till he was a man; 40  
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm’d  
In the unshrinking station where he fought,  
But like a man he died.

*Siw.* Then he is dead?

*Ross.* Ay, and brought off the field: your cause of  
sorrow

Must not be measured by his worth; for then  
It hath no end.

*Siw.* Had he his hurts before?

*Ross.* Ay, on the front.

*Siw.* Why then, God’s soldier be he!  
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,  
I would not wish them to a fairer death:  
And so, his knell is knoll’d.

*Mal.* He's worth more sorrow, 50  
And that I'll spend for him.

*Siw.* He's worth no more :  
They say he parted well, and paid his score :  
And so, God be with him ! Here comes newer com-  
fort.

*Re-enter MACDUFF, and Soldiers bearing MACBETH's head on a spear.*

*Macd.* Hail, king ! for so thou art : behold, where  
stands  
The usurper's cursed head : the time is free :  
I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl,  
That speak my salutation in their minds ;  
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine :  
Hail, King of Scotland !

*All.* Hail, King of Scotland. [*Flourish.*]

*Mal.* We shall not spend a large expense of time  
Before we reckon with your several loves, 61  
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,  
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland  
In such an honour named. What's more to do,  
Which would be planted newly with the time,  
As calling home our exiled friends abroad  
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny ;  
Producing forth the cruel ministers  
Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen,  
Who, as 't is thought, by self and violent hands 70  
Took off her life ; this, and what needful else  
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,  
We will perform in measure, time and place :  
So, thanks to all at once and to each one,  
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*]

63. be earls, the first, etc. Thus Holinshed makes him say.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR SPECIAL STUDY.

*Relation of the Play to History.* The real history of the life of Macbeth will prove only a source of confusion to the student. Shakespeare did not know it. Basing his work on Holinshed's Chronicle, he did not even care to follow that consistently. "Shakespeare," says Professor Corson, "always brought an independent dramatic purpose to the adopted story or history, by which dramatic purpose the movement of the play is determined." Not even from Holinshed, then, can we obtain new light upon action or character; the thing to be gained by examining the Chronicle is a notion of Shakespeare's method of work, — his principle of selection, his ethical and artistic aim. When he deviates from his original, we should seek his reason, moral or æsthetic.

*Duration of the Action.* In regard to the time covered by the action, the usual puzzle presents itself, — the inconsistency of "Shakespeare's two clocks." (For a full explanation see the Furness Variorum *Othello*, or, for a briefer one, the Introduction to *The Merchant of Venice*, in this series.) Note the many touches that seem to spur on, with fierce rapidity, an action that really demands years.

*Genuineness of the Text.* The portions rejected by Mr. White are Act III. sc. v.; Act IV. sc. i. lines 1–48, also from "Sweet bodements," line 96, to "mortal custom," and lines 125–132; Act IV. sc. iii. lines 140–159; and Act V. sc. viii. lines 35–75. The Clarendon Press editors are even more radical; but it is noticeable that they retain Act IV. sc. i. lines 1–48, and suspect Act I. sc. ii.

Notwithstanding differences of opinion among scholars, the student is here advised to consider the play as an



organic whole. It will be found, when carefully studied, to have a wonderful æsthetic and moral unity. The only passages which seriously mar this unity occur in Act I. sc. ii., Act III. sc. v., and the brief part of Hecate in Act IV. sc. i. lines 39–43. These will be examined in their order.

*Act I. sc. i.* “The true reason for the first appearance of the Witches,” says Coleridge, “is to strike the keynote of the character of the whole drama.” The scene, therefore, briefly and boldly presents two essential ideas, as a preparation for all that is to follow. We are immediately confronted by something *out of nature*; for the deeds represented in this play are to be “’gainst nature still.” Compare Act II. sc. ii. (iv. according to the folio). At the same time we are made aware that this unnatural element is wholly evil. It is not *above* nature, in the literal sense of supernatural; it is a contradiction, a reversal of nature. In greater measure than any other work of Shakespeare, *Macbeth* is the tragedy of a false, a reversed standard. Hence we have as prelude the Witches’ muttered creed, — not lightly introduced as a jingling charm, but full of deep and dreadful significance: “Fair is foul, and foul is fair.” Compare the austere denunciation in Isaiah, chapter v. 20: “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”

It is interesting to trace these two associated ideas — the “breach in nature” and the reversal of the moral standard — through the rhetoric of the play; for in Shakespeare the great root-ideas are always budding out into the rhetoric. It seems, to change the figure, as if a central light were reflected in a series of word-mirrors. It would be well to make a list of the instances in which these two notes are again struck.

*Sc. ii.* The speech of Ross, lines 50–53, seems to imply that Cawdor was present on the field. If so, he was taken



prisoner by Macbeth; and as he is executed by Duncan's order before Macbeth's arrival at Forres (see sc. iv.), the situation becomes hard to explain. The utterances of Macbeth in sc. iii. (lines 72-73, 107-108) also become unintelligible; and it is certainly absurd for the vaguely informed Angus to assure Macbeth that his prisoner is a traitor. We are thus driven to conclude (1) that the passage in the present scene does not mean that Cawdor was in the battle, but that he is known by Ross to have given Norway secret assistance (see the ambiguous statements of Angus, sc. iii. lines 111-114); or (2) that the scene, which is comparatively poor, was written by some one who had not mastered Shakespeare's design; or (3) that Shakespeare himself has fallen into inconsistency through haste. In any case, we must not use a strained interpretation in an undoubted and masterly scene, such as sc. iii., to make it conform to one which is certainly inferior and possibly ungeniue.

*Sc. iii.* Here we see the comprehensiveness of the Witches' love of evil; to them the pettiest act of malignity seems as dear as an "imperial theme." — What are these foul, unnatural creatures, who know the future? In Holinshed Macbeth is greeted by "three women in strange and wild apparel, resembling creatures of elder world;" afterwards, "the common opinion was, that these women were either the weird sisters, that is . . . the goddesses of destinie, or else some nymphs or fairies." They are quite distinct from the "wizards, in whose words he put great confidence," of the latter part of the story. Shakespeare has chosen to blend these two elements; the same strange beings who meet Macbeth upon the heath are sought by him in Act IV. Notice the gain in compactness and concreteness. But the fusion creates a puzzle. By their speeches these are clearly witches, of the type believed in by Shakespeare's countrymen in his day; yet they are called "the weird sisters" — the Fate Sisters. The question arises, to what extent did Shakespeare intend these mysterious women to represent Destiny?

We may safely answer, not to such an extent that Macbeth's free-will is fettered. "Only free agency is dramatic." (Corson.) (Note that the strange power of the Witches is strangely limited; the first Witch is powerless to wreck the ship; she can only toss it with tempest, and drain the sleepless shipman "dry as hay.") But when once the will, originally free, has turned toward evil, it finds in the external world a startling assistance and acceleration. (See Lady Macbeth's exclamation, sc. v. lines 45-76.) These Witches embody, suggests Professor Dowden, "the powers auxiliary to vice existing outside ourselves." They help at the birth of evil deeds; and then, in truth, those deeds *become* Destiny.

"Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,  
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still."

When Macbeth enters, he is speaking to Banquo of the day just ending. The words of both are careless; Macbeth's may refer to the foul weather and the fair event of the fight, or perhaps altogether to the battle, — "a day so foul with slaughter, so fair in glory, I have never yet seen." The important point is, that the words recall to us, like a strain of music, the creed of the Witches; and that we are also made to feel that the day is a supreme one for Macbeth. He has done his noblest deeds; his sword has twice saved his country. But before the sun sets, the lust of power which he has secretly indulged is to be strangely stimulated; it is not only the fairest day, but the foulest, the closest to the forces of evil, his life has yet known.

Why does Macbeth start (line 51)? Not because the thought of the throne is new to him; rather because it is not new. (For absolute proof of this, see sc. vii. lines 47-52. Yet a man's hidden communings with his own heart do not wholly commit him to an action, either good or evil; and a confidence made to his wife was little more than self-communing. Whatever he may have breathed of resolution, — may even impulsively have sworn, — Macbeth is

*not* resolved.) Plainly, the cause of his present agitation is the sudden discovery that he has not dreamed and plotted to himself alone ; that some strange external agency has entered into league with him, without his knowledge. A sense that the occasion which seemed remote is imminent, that a shadowy Accomplice (now spoken of as “chance,” but later as “the common enemy of man”) is somehow thrusting it upon him, — this it is which fills him with perturbation and horror.

Read this scene intently, as if you were to play Macbeth’s part, and must understand the source of each utterance. In the soliloquy, lines 127–142, first appears that overmastering power of the imagination which is Macbeth’s chief characteristic, and the main cause, first of his hesitation, and afterward of his precipitancy in action. In this, as in his emotional tendency, Macbeth is distinctly a Celt. — Notice his bewilderment, his confusion as to what is foul and what is fair. Finally he hurls the whole entanglement from him, with a touch of fatalism, casting all upon “chance” and future time. — Follow Banquo through the scene, and observe his natural, manly demeanor.

*Sc. iv.* Dramatic irony occurs when the persons of the play are ignorant of facts known to the reader or the audience, and therefore speak or act in a strikingly inappropriate way. Note here Duncan’s words to Macbeth, immediately following his speech about Cawdor. What feeling rises in the reader? This expedient is presently repeated ; notice where. Find examples of it in *sc. vi.*, and a very impressive one in *Act II. sc. i.* (iii. in the folio). — See note on line 39. This point, often slighted, is important.

*Sc. v.* Observe Lady Macbeth’s singleness of purpose. Her nature, as compared with Macbeth’s, is simple and balanced ; all her powers work together. She is rapid, clear, and direct of thought, and her will is as strong as steel. Her standard is evident ; she “has chosen evil to be her good ;” hence to her “fair is foul.” (Lines 13–14.

Is her judgment of Macbeth correct?) Notice that she is confident that Macbeth shares her view of life, and covets the crown; (see also sc. vii. line 42 — a very important line). She believes that he is not really repelled by the thought of Duncan's murder, but merely unwilling to connect himself with it. (Lines 21–22.) Is there anything in the play to show that her ambition is for herself alone?

The terrible passage, lines 37–51, is really an evil prayer — a cry to external powers of evil for reinforcement in evil. We do not cry out thus for that which is not needed. Can one imagine Goneril or Regan putting up such a prayer? What are we to conclude as to this woman's original nature? — was it "fiend-like," or had it the possibilities of the average womanhood? (Notice, on this point, Act II. sc. ii. in folio, lines 13–14, — a revelation of character as by a flash of lightning.) If we regard such speeches as the present, and sc. vii. lines 54–59, as a wilful violation of nature, doubly violent from the effort involved, they become highly suggestive.

*Sc. vi.* The exquisite beauty of lines 1–10 needs no comment. For a fine analysis of the epithet "temple-haunting," see Lowell, *Shakespeare Once More*, iii. 45. — Why does Macbeth not appear in this scene? Does it not seem, from his non-appearance, and from his brief speeches in sc. v., that though he was apparently resolved at the end of sc. iv., his long, lonely ride had given him a chance to reflect and to waver?

*Sc. vii.* The student should carefully analyze this soliloquy. It divides itself into five finished portions, and a sixth which is interrupted. Where is there an expression of a lingering sense of moral responsibility? Is the argument in lines 16–25 against killing Duncan because "he hath been clear in his great office," or because "his virtues will plead like angels" with the people against his murderer? What consideration is really holding back Macbeth, and how does Lady Macbeth remove it?

In the energy of the action we hardly feel the immense pathos of this scene. For whatever reasons, Macbeth had concluded to "proceed no further." It is his wife who urges him on to crime and ruin; and we cannot doubt that she does it in love of him. Her sharp speech is only a goad, to drive him to the deed which she believes best for him, — terrible thought! Her act is like the pushing of a boulder, which hangs balanced, over a precipice; after that one impulse, nothing can stay it, and it gathers impetus as it goes. — What words of Macbeth here mark the climax?

*Act II. sc. i.* [In folio, i. and ii.] Throughout this superb scene there is a contrast between the emotional and imaginative Macbeth, and his wife, who is not only far less emotional and imaginative, but who has all her powers under the control of an inflexible will. It must be strongly emphasized that this is a contrast of organization, and not of moral condition. At the end of the scene we cannot justly pronounce that Macbeth is remorseful, his wife incapable of remorse; judgment must be reserved until the end of the play. — In what succession of incidents is the contrast developed?

[Sc. iii. in folio.] See De Quincey's essay "On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth." His subtle explanation of the effect of the knocking applies equally to the introduction of the Porter.

Notice line 73. Lady Macbeth is playing a part, yet cannot escape from her own individuality. Her attention has so long been exclusively fixed upon "our house," that if she were not actively wicked she would still be narrow and unsympathetic. How does her speech strike Banquo? What act has Macbeth committed that formed no part of the original plan? What is the immediate effect of that act upon Macduff? It is at this point that Lady Macbeth swoons, — "not in feigning, but in fact," says Professor Dowden. Can you find a probable cause for her swoon?

*Act III.* We are now to mark widely different effects of the great crime, as shown in Macbeth and in Lady Macbeth. Macbeth's chief source of torment is the reflection that Banquo's issue will rule in the kingdom, and the attendant fear that the knowledge of this fact may awaken ambition in Banquo himself. Macbeth's mind is "full of scorpions," yet he does not despair. He cherishes the false notion that he may yet establish himself firmly and happily on the throne. (See sc. iv. lines 21-23. Find other passages that confirm the analysis just given.) Lady Macbeth apparently indulges no such idea; she has exerted her energies once for all, and gained "the ornament of life," only to find it worthless; "nought's had, all's spent." This is the tone of despair — a despair concealed from her husband. — Before Duncan's murder Lady Macbeth was the impelling force. Now she no longer urges or even suggests action; unless we accept as a suggestion the vague reflection, — thrown out with an idea of comforting Macbeth for the moment, and changing the current of his thoughts, — that in Banquo and Fleance "nature's copy's not eterne." Macbeth, on the contrary, in the fatuous pride of his new independence, concealing his plans from his wife, hurries on from crime to crime with increasing impetus. (See sc. iv. lines 136-140.) His compunction has entirely disappeared; and there is a new development, — the murderous cunning which he displays in his conversation with the assassins of Banquo. (Find touches of a growing pleasure in evil, in his speeches in this Act; to what root-idea does this carry us back?) The student may trace through the remainder of the play evidences of the increasing precipitancy of Macbeth's action. Find one line in sc. ii. spoken by Macbeth which would serve as a summary of the special theme of this Act, and at the same time as an explanation of his entire future course. Find a speech of his to Lady Macbeth in which he takes a certain masculine attitude of superiority in action, which is precisely the



reverse of his attitude in Acts I. and II. In what speeches of Lady Macbeth, Act I. sc. v., might we have marked this note of conscious superiority in action?

What glimpses have we, in Acts III. and IV., of the working out of the sentence pronounced by the imaginary voice, "Macbeth shall sleep no more"?

In sc. iv. Lady Macbeth displays all her old presence of mind and self-control, and uses her former method with Macbeth, endeavoring, for his own sake, to sting him into self-command by a show of contempt. This method proves ineffective now; but she retains her firm grasp of her own faculties till she has, as gracefully and plausibly as possible, dismissed the guests. Then, indeed, we recognize her utter surrender, in the brief, exhausted answers she gives to Macbeth's half-delirious questions. From this point she makes no attempt to prompt, to guide, or to check his action; he is quite beyond her.

Is the ghost in the banquet-scene the strongest of Macbeth's hallucinations, in the same class as the dagger and the voice? Or are we to regard it as an objective apparition, to be represented on the stage? Try to ascertain the usage of great actors. This cannot be conclusive, but may be taken as testimony.

*Sc. v.* This scene is manifestly inferior. It is needless to the plot, and reduces the Witches to subordinates, thus destroying the impressiveness of what has gone before. Hecate is one of Middleton's characters in *The Witch*: see Introduction.

*Act IV. sc. i.* Whatever difference of opinion may exist as to lines 1-38, — which are certainly vigorous enough, — there will probably be little hesitation in ascribing the entire part of Hecate to Middleton. If we regard the incantation as Shakespeare's, its accumulated hideousness is an insistence on the fairness, to the Witches, of all foul things. Notice the power of Macbeth's conjuration, lines

50-60, and its consistency with certain touches of imperious and passionate selfishness in Act III. scenes ii. and iv. ; find these instances, and another in Act V. sc. v. It is here as if Macbeth felt himself at odds with the laws of the universe, and yet, in his delusion, dreamed of overbearing them by his savage will. Note the growth of this insubordinate will since Act I.

*Sc. ii.* Hitherto the effect of Macbeth's crimes on himself has been chiefly emphasized ; the rest of this Act shows the far-reaching effect on others. — How pathetic are Lady Macduff's reproaches, contrasted with her loyal anger in line 80 ; and the quips of the over-shrewd boy, who flashes out at last his tiny spark of knightly rage, and dies with his shrill, love-prompted cry of " Mother, run away, I pray you ! " It was necessary to prepare us, by this scene, for the full force of Macduff's speeches in the last part of sc. iii., and by the whole episode to bring home to the imagination the sorrows of all Scotland. What would the generalizations of Macduff and Ross effect without this presentation ?

*Sc. iii.* The dialogue between Malcolm and Macduff is taken almost bodily from Holinshed. The situation is strained, but the dramatic effect is unquestionable. — One of the finest passages in the play is the exclamation of Macduff, lines 216-219. Try to explain its power. "*He* has no children ;" of whom is Macduff speaking ?

In regard to lines 140-159, Mr. White says, " This passage about the king's-evil has the air of an addition, for the special purpose of flattering James when the tragedy was played before him." Before finally adopting, however, a conclusion which cheapens the passage, it is well to consider other possible reasons for the introduction of such an episode. Throughout the play one of Shakespeare's favorite metaphors is significantly repeated, — the comparison of a man's individual being, sometimes spiritual, sometimes physical, to the State, and *vice versa*. Find this, possibly, in Act I. sc. iii. line 140 ; certainly in a corresponding passage in *Julius Cæsar*, Act II. sc. i. lines 67-69. (In what



lines in *Macbeth*, Act V. scenes ii. and iii. is the same idea suggested?) As there is evidently, through Acts IV. and V., a contrasting of the beneficence of true sovereignty with the ruin wrought by a bad king, it does not seem strange that, to balance the presentation of a "tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues," we should have a royal healer of evil, a holy king whose very touch has power to cure the diseases of his subjects.

*Act V. sc. i.* We recognize with a startled awe the subtle poetical justice of this scene, remembering the suggestion of an outraged sanctity of nature in "Macbeth doth murder sleep." It was Lady Macbeth who breathed the first word of this outrage: "When Duncan is asleep," — and now avenging Sleep at last betrays to others her husband's secret, which it has been the aim of her later life to guard. — Find speeches in former Acts corresponding to each of her utterances here. She is living it all over again, but "with a difference." In Act II. she was able, by a tremendous exertion of will, to suppress her natural horror, even her disgust at the physical consequences of the crime. But now we see her while the will is off guard; and we know at last that the awful scene was burning itself into her brain, even while she was speaking the coldest words to her husband. What former speech contrasts pathetically with lines 50–51, showing us by a flash the great gulf of experience that lies between the two moments?

Notice the indications, in the latter part of the play, that Lady Macbeth took her own life. What is Macbeth's view of suicide?

*Sc. iii.* The almost insane confidence of Macbeth has grown from the germ seen in Act III., the delusion that there is a possibility of making his state "whole as the marble." This delusion has increased in strength, and to it has been added the influence of the Witches' misleading prophecies. But we find, alternating with this mad confidence, signs of a great weariness. There is something

strangely piteous in Macbeth's complaints of the bareness of his autumnal "way of life;" he is almost child-like in his inability to connect effect with cause, and his willing self-pity.

*Sc. iv.* The Birnam wood episode, displaying the cunning of Malcolm, is taken from Holinshed.

*Sc. v.* On hearing "the cry of women," Macbeth himself observes how callous he has become; and on learning of the queen's death, he gives the fullest expression to his world-weariness. This beautifully poetic passage must always be understood as dramatic; it is Macbeth's verdict on life; for the traitor and murderer all is confusion, "a general mist of error."

*Scenes vi., vii., and viii.* are practically one — the battle. In *sc. viii.* Macbeth's mad confidence is struck dead by Macduff's revelation. (What warning utterance of Banquo's, in Act I., is recalled by lines 19–22?) The only thing that survives in the wreck of Macbeth's manhood is his physical bravery, which makes it possible for us to bear the horror of his end. He dies like a wild beast at bay; his last savage cry, as he hurls himself upon Macduff, is less insupportable than the whimper of cowardice would have been.

Shakespeare found in the English part of Holinshed's Chronicle the touching episode of the death of young Siward, — "right-noble," "with all his hurts before," — and the reception of the tidings by the grim father who freely gives his son to be "God's soldier." The passage seems to have been introduced at this point, to give us a needed breath of the bracing air of heroism, after the depressing spectacle of Macbeth's decay. The true moral standard is boldly set up again by the rough hand of old Siward, as he praises his son's "fair" death. Heaven's "instruments" have re-established the sound order of things; "the time is free;" and now, neither burdened nor relaxed, but disciplined and awed, we emerge from the shadow of the great tragedy.

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